

# ANNUAL REPORT 16



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION



The Annual Report of the Family Responsibilities Commission summarises the Commission and its financial and corporate performance for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

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

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**Front cover:** Bryan Spratt, Mossman Gorge

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*2015 Coen School Attendance Awards, Aurora Pratt won the Overall Best Attendance with 99.5 percent and is now a student at St Peters Lutheran College in Brisbane. Aurora is photographed with Shahmin Pratt and Lorraine Jaffer.*



*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.*

*Local Commissioners who are also Councillors for their respective Councils of Aurukun and Hope Vale. From left to right: Aurukun Commissioner Ada Woola, Aurukun Commissioner Edgar Kerindun (who is also the Deputy Mayor of the Aurukun Shire Council), Hope Vale Commissioner Selina Bowen, Aurukun Commissioner Vera Koomeeta and Aurukun Commissioner Doris Poonkamelya*





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29 September 2016

The Honourable Curtis Pitt MP  
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships  
PO Box 314  
GORDONVALE QLD 4865

Dear Minister Pitt

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2015-2016 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 108 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely

David Glasgow, AM  
Commissioner  
Family Responsibilities Commission

# CONTENTS



Preamble – Noel Pearson	6
Commissioner Glasgow’s Message	7
Income Management in Doomadgee	9
Strategic Overview	10
How the Family Responsibilities Commission Works	16
Building Relationships – Wellbeing Centres	20
Who Makes Up the Commission	22
Domestic Violence	32
Local Commissioners’ Year in Review – Coen	33
Local Commissioners’ Year in Review – Aurukun	34
Local Commissioners’ Year in Review – Doomadgee	36
Local Commissioners’ Year in Review – Hope Vale	38
Local Commissioners’ Year in Review – Mossman Gorge	40
Registrar’s Year in Review	42
Local Commissioner Development Week	45
Our Performance – Review of Operations	48
Challenges and Outlook	58
Governance	62
Local Coordinator Profile – Hope Vale	74
Financial Statement	75
Appendices	105
Glossary of Terms	111
Contact Details	112

## FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION

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*Kage Logan’s first day at Doomadgee State  
School, with big brother Daniel Logan*





# PREAMBLE - NOEL PEARSON



*Enabling and empowering local reform leaders to drive change lies at the heart of all that I stand for. It is one of my greatest privileges to have worked alongside so many leaders from Cape York over the years to help them achieve this most fundamental goal. Beginning as the centrepiece of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial in 2008, the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) has breathed life into the idea of restoring local authority over the past eight years.*

*Despite its successes, in some ways the fate of our most disadvantaged families hinges upon our ability to reclaim, indeed to reimagine, the Welfare Reform agenda of which the FRC has played an integral part. Our Welfare Reform agenda has never been narrowly defined and has always been about more than attaching conditions to people's income support.*

*This fundamental truth and the role of the FRC in the Cape York approach to Welfare Reform are still often overlooked and misunderstood. For example, many people would be surprised that only a small fraction of people in welfare reform communities have ever been placed on an income management order. In contrast to the Northern Territory Intervention, Welfare Reform in Cape York is not a blunt instrument.*

*The reforms provide a singular example of a Welfare Reform approach expansively, rather than narrowly, defined. The fundamental obligations that form the threshold for FRC conferencing are uncontroversial—ensuring adequate care of children, children regularly attending school, paying the household rent, and abiding by the law. When a person is conferenced by the FRC, income management is but one outcome. It is used where it is necessary to oblige someone to meet their basic household financial responsibilities like putting food on the table and paying the bills. Most importantly the FRC also can act as a key referral and case management point, and the FRC Commissioners encourage people to seek support and build their capabilities in terms of employment, education, money management, parenting, or social and emotional wellbeing. To this extent the FRC's effectiveness is dependent on the effectiveness of the capability building system. While gains have been made, in Indigenous communities there remains an enormous implementation challenge to build capabilities as needed.*

*The FRC and its Local Commissioners have demonstrated the value of empowered Indigenous leaders at the frontline of the reform effort. Battles have been fought and won to ensure that Local Commissioners have real power to confront those members of their own communities that fail to uphold what is a universally agreed threshold of responsibility. The FRC Commissioners continue to wield their power with far greater nuance, understanding and impact than interventions from outsiders can ever hope to achieve. We have made real progress. Now is not the time to abandon our expansive Welfare Reform approach. Rather, we must take careful heed of the lessons learnt from the many people that have been involved in 'giving it a go', and we must double down to face the ongoing implementation challenges before us.*

*The FRC was not intended to become a permanent fixture and the time has come for Coen to put plans in place to move beyond the FRC. In Coen, school attendance now sometimes reaches higher than the Queensland State average, and young people routinely expect to go away to boarding school at the end of their primary schooling. Coen should be rewarded for its achievements, and there must now be investment to support economic opportunities in Coen to create local employment opportunities.*

*I look forward to continuing to work with the FRC and each of its Commissioners as we embark on the next phase of this important reform journey.*

Noel Pearson

# COMMISSIONER GLASGOW'S MESSAGE



## From the Commissioner

The Commission publishes this report of its activities and assessment of its performance during the past twelve months.

We operated again within our budget providing an operating surplus in the financial year just concluded. Being entrusted with significant public monies in the administration of our statutory functions, we are focused to ensure that the Commission operates cost effectively whilst remaining committed to achieving its objectives.

## Commission focus

The Commission's activities in each of the five communities over the past year are detailed in this annual report. Many challenges remain which are outlined by Registrar Maxine McLeod. Significant and troubling though they may be (particularly in the community of Aurukun) the Aurukun Commissioners, like their colleagues in Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, remain committed and are determined to work with the community to achieve lasting improvements. They are a formidable band of women and men who deserve our respect and support.

Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge each continue maintaining solid school attendance with improving academic success. The attitude of an uncooperative minority in Aurukun continues to exasperate the best efforts of the Local Commissioners and Elders. Doomadgee has shown encouraging results, and although improvement has not been consistent, the Commission is hopeful to establish an upward trend in the next financial year.

The indifference to the value of education shown by some families is frustrating the best efforts of many of us. This attitude, combined with unrestricted noise disturbances (loud music in the late evenings and early mornings) and drunken and violent confrontations within the Aurukun community over the past eighteen months are the major cause of poor and fluctuating school attendance.

Government closure of the Aurukun school in May diverted public and community attention from these problems to the management of the school and its students. Whilst education in Aurukun has had its problems, they are insignificant when compared with the lawlessness and indifference of a small number to the needs of children for undisturbed sleep, and their right to a safe and happy life.

I am encouraged to see that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) has now focused a considerable amount of energy to attempt to transition Aurukun into a functioning community. The appointment of Brendon McMahon on 30 May as the Senior Government Coordinator is regarded by all as a significant step in this direction. Brendon McMahon's appointment has been universally welcomed by not only the members of the community, but also service providers. His leadership has already shown improved accountability and commitment from those tasked with delivering services to the community.

## Commission staff

Our small and dedicated staff have functioned well over the past year and have been ably lead by Maxine McLeod, who herself has been active in visiting each community and responding to their needs.



# COMMISSIONER GLASGOW'S MESSAGE

We were indeed fortunate to obtain the services of Camille Banks as our Client Manager in November 2015. She has reviewed procedures, brought a fresh perspective and refocused our operations on the ground. Our Accountant, Andrea Cotton, has continued her dedicated service to the Commission. I acknowledge their remarkable leadership and organisational skills.

I also acknowledge the commitment of our Local Coordinators who live and work in the communities. They provide inspiration to our Commissioners and also regularly attend to tasks outside their position descriptions to fill in gaps in services.

Deputy Commissioner Curtin continues the responsibilities of the Doomadgee circuit. I thank him for his valued work.

## Concerns – Child Safety and Youth Justice

I have reported to Government the significant, and as yet unsatisfactorily explained, reduction in the receipt of Child Safety and Welfare notices for the communities of Aurukun and Hope Vale – 75 percent and 47 percent respectively. These reductions, together with the effect of recent amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 1992* which preclude the sending of Childrens Court notices to the Commission as from July 1, 2016, are of major concern to me as Commissioner.

## Acknowledgements

I record the gratitude of the Commission, our Local Commissioners and staff to Noel Pearson, the architect of the FRC. His continuing selfless leadership and inspiration, particularly during times of challenge from the uninformed and self-interested, has been of great comfort to us all.

I also acknowledge the dedication, leadership and commitment of Clare O'Connor, Director-General of DATSIP, to improving the lives of Queensland's Indigenous people. She has challenged us all to do better.

I am confident that the FRC will continue to deliver on its objectives and will be competent to operate effectively within expanded areas if requested by Indigenous communities and the Queensland and Australian Governments.

**David Glasgow, AM**  
**Family Responsibilities Commissioner**



*Local Commissioners from Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge with Commissioner Glasgow and Deputy Commissioner Curtin at the Local Commissioner Development Week May 2016*



# INCOME MANAGEMENT IN DOOMADGEE



## INCOME MANAGEMENT IN DOOMADGEE

In March 2016 the Commission received authorisation to commence the implementation of income management orders for clients who come within the Commission's jurisdiction in the community of Doomadgee.

The first income management orders were issued by the Commissioners over the 12-13 April 2016 conference sitting which was the beginning of term 2 of the school year. A total of five orders at 60 percent were imposed in that sitting. The scheduled conferencing week coincided with dates that Centrelink staff were conducting business activities in the community, and this meant that the necessary processing of income management orders happened quickly and seamlessly, and BasicsCards were issued to clients without delay.

From 12 April to the end of June 2016 a total of 28 orders have been imposed on Doomadgee clients, 24 orders at 60 percent of welfare payments and four at 75 percent. In addition to orders imposed, one resident has entered into a voluntary income management agreement whereby the client has requested that payments are directed onto a BasicsCard to assist with budgeting for necessities. In that same period no applications to amend or end an income management order have been submitted to the Commission.

For the most part income management has been well received by the clients for whom the orders have been issued. BasicsCards are largely viewed as beneficial in managing budgets and meeting living expenses as opposed to a punitive measure intended to cause inconvenience or hardship. Doomadgee Commissioners are optimistic that the introduction of income management will have a positive impact on the school attendance of the community's children.

*"It is great for us to finally have income management in Doomadgee. We have issued 28 conditional income management orders to our clients and they have been well received. We know that income management is a necessary tool to see our community grow and we look forward to seeing the positive results it has for our clients. We know we have many challenges ahead, but our team is strong and we will continue to work together to improve the lives of and prospects for the children of Doomadgee."*

*Doomadgee Commissioner Christopher Logan*



# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

## Our vision

Vibrant welfare reform communities that are responsible, healthy, safe and sustainable.

## Our purpose

Supporting welfare reform community members to restore socially responsible standards of behaviour, local authority and wellbeing for themselves and their families.

## Our values

- Safety:** We value the right of everyone to live in safe communities.
- Respect:** We believe that respect for oneself builds the foundation for wellbeing.
- Ownership:** We are committed to encouraging communities to take ownership of their present and future.
- Innovation:** We actively seek and encourage creative ideas to build the potential for lasting change.
- Empowerment:** We are committed to empowering people to take the initiative to reform their communities and build their own direction and future.
- Diversity:** We are passionate about respecting the diversity and cultural richness of the communities.

## Strategic outcomes

- Improved community wellbeing
- Improved community responsibility
- Improved organisational capability.

## Strategic objectives

- Support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform communities
- Help people in welfare reform communities to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their communities and the individuals and families of their communities
- Create a capable, agile and innovative organisation
- Know our clients, communities and build partnerships.

## 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 State and Australian Governments that achieve the outcomes sought for the welfare reform communities. In doing so, we will nurture a spirit of inquiry and innovation, and will embrace the challenge of sourcing unconventional and creative solutions 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 Cape York Welfare Reform (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 a design report titled “From Hand Out To Hand Up” in May 2007 and a 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 were to restore social norms and local Indigenous authority. The trial aimed to initiate and support a positive change in social norms and community behaviours in response to chronic levels of passive welfare, 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.

The broad objectives of the welfare reform agenda 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:

- effective 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, social and civic activities as well as service co-location



# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

- 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.

The reforms are 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, service delivery and community organisations.

This philosophy is grounded in the Institute's view that historically policies have created a passive welfare environment in Indigenous communities which resulted in a retraction of positive social norms, and fostered the displacement of Indigenous responsibility. 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.

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

The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the FRC 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 FRC Act at that time the Commission was to cease operations on 1 January 2012. Each subsequent year until 2014, following Australian and State Government consultations and budget allocations, the Commission was granted 12 month extensions.

On 5 August 2014 the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2014 was introduced into Parliament. The Bill proposed the following amendments aimed at increasing efficiencies and expanding operations:

- to omit the FRC Act's sunset clause (section 152), which states that the FRC Act expires on 1 January 2015
- to amend the definition of welfare reform community area in the FRC Act to replace specific references to communities (Aurukun, Hope Vale, Coen and Mossman Gorge) with "an area prescribed by regulation as a welfare reform community area"
- to add new 'justice triggers' for notifications to the Commission if a community member is convicted in the District or Supreme Courts, or a child is convicted in a court
- to amend the disqualification provisions for Local Commissioners and
- to require the Family Responsibilities Board (FR Board) to meet every six months, rather than quarterly.

# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW



On 14 October 2014 the Bill was passed by the Queensland Parliament and the FRC Act was proclaimed on 28 November 2014.

On 14 July 2015 the Queensland State Treasurer Curtis Pitt released the 2015-16 State Budget wherein it was announced that the State Government would continue to revitalise frontline services with further financial support for Welfare Reform until 30 June 2019.

A further legislative development affecting Commission operations was the passing of the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 by Parliament with unanimous support on 1 December 2015. The Bill proposed to increase the effectiveness of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* by:

- including an additional domestic violence trigger in response to recommendations in the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland's report, 'Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic Violence in Queensland' (Recommendation 93)
- expanding the scope for delegation of the FRC Commissioner's powers and responsibilities to the Local Commissioners
- broadening the suitability requirements for the Registrar to more accurately reflect the operational elements of the role
- removing redundant provisions and
- improving information availability in regard to the existing youth justice trigger.

The Bill received Royal Assent on 17 December 2015.

## About us

As part of the broader 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, Doomadgee, 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 Welfare Reforms and the Statement of Objectives for the Community published by the Queensland Government. The Commission contributes specifically to the following Government objectives:

- "Creating jobs and a diverse economy – increasing workforce participation" – by working to reduce passive welfare, assisting clients to increase their financial stability and initiating a continuous improvement strategy in regard to our organisational capability
- "Delivering quality frontline services" – by providing effective and efficient client services for families, strengthening collaborative cross-agency partnerships to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authorities, improving access to relevant service provision in the communities and working to increase school enrolment and attendance



# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

- “Building safe, caring and connected communities” – by influencing the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour, promoting Indigenous local authority and nurturing a spirit of inquiry and innovation in order to address the complex problems facing the welfare reform communities.

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, the Local Commissioners’ Handbook and annual on-line training in Ethical Decision Making and the Code of Conduct.

Our activities specifically support DATSIP 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, seven 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.

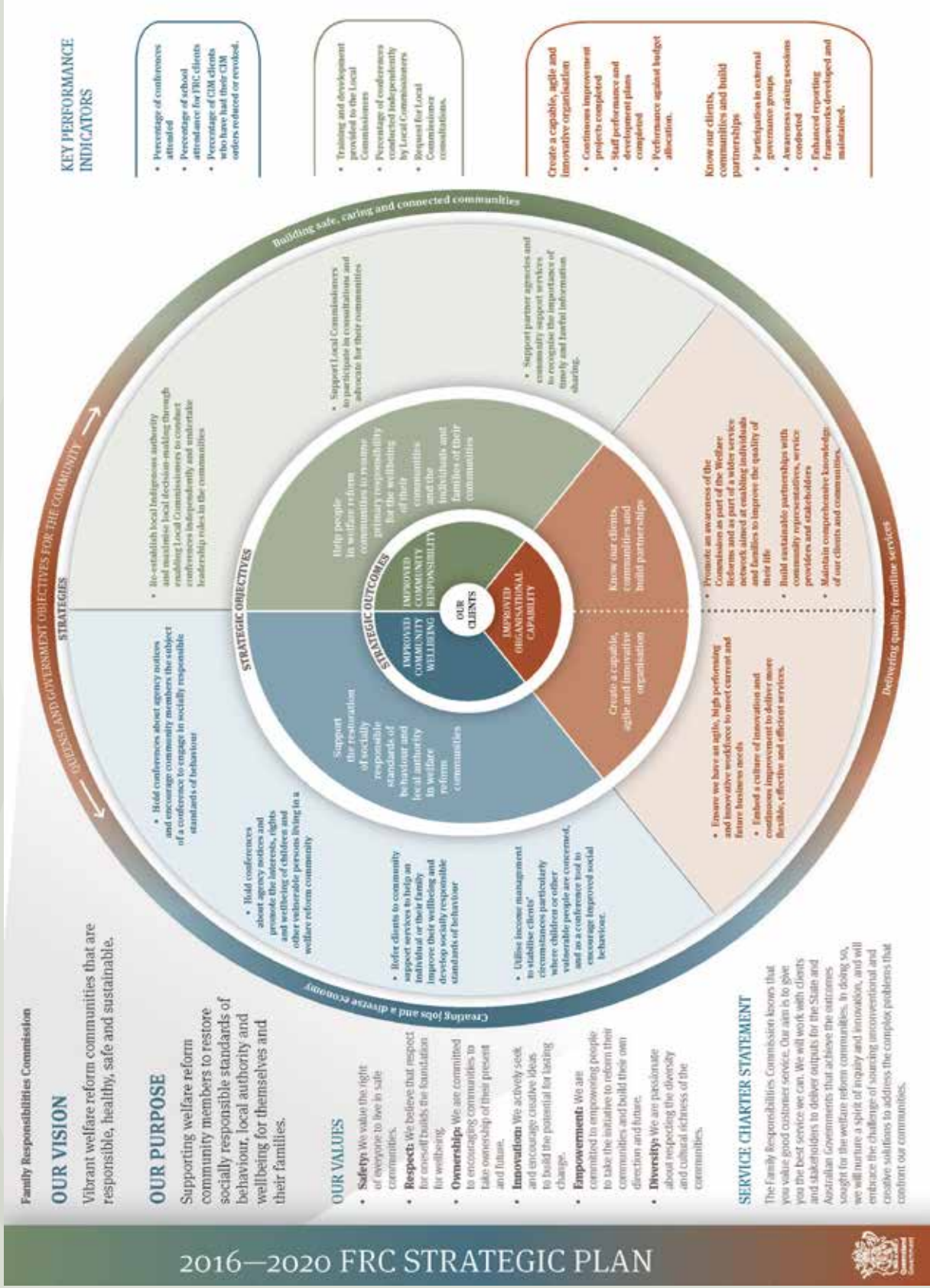
The Commission supports the ‘Towards a Queensland action plan for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families’ by participating in round table forums and working groups and empowering/stabilising families through the conferencing and referral processes.

## Our challenge

The Commission delivers services to five communities, all of which are culturally unique and some of which are 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.

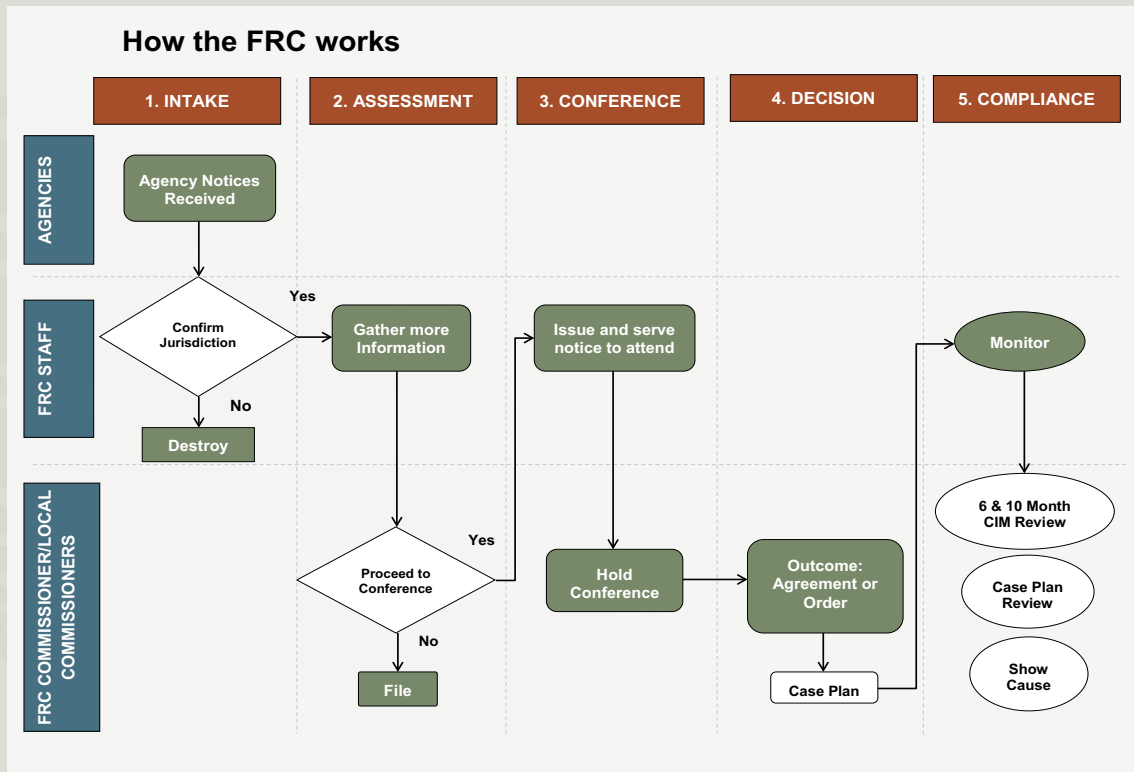
Our challenge is to work collaboratively with partner agencies, as part of a linked service system to engage, empower and enable individuals, families and the wider community to make positive and lasting change.

# STRATEGIC OVERVIEW





# HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS



The primary objective of the Commission, as set out in the FRC Act, is 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 community member who is a welfare recipient living in an area prescribed by regulation as a welfare reform community 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 FRC 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 for the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge in the following circumstances:

- The Department of Education and Training (DET) 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 (DCCSDS) must submit a Child Safety and Welfare Notice where the Chief Executive becomes aware of an allegation of harm or risk to a child.



# HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS



- The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) must submit a Court Offence Notice if a person is convicted of an offence, or if a domestic violence protection order is made against a person.
- The Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) or the provider of social housing must submit a Tenancy Breach Notice if the tenant has breached their social housing tenancy agreement.

Agency notices for the community of Doomadgee are presently received from DET and DCCSDS only.

Once an agency notice is received, a determination is made as to whether the person/s notified is within the jurisdiction of the Commission in accordance with the FRC Act. Section 49 of the FRC Act provides that the Commission can deal with an agency notice relating to a community member. Section 7 of the FRC Act defines a community member as being a person who is a welfare recipient and who also lives in one of the five welfare reform communities, or has lived there for a period of at least three months. On 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 associated persons should be invited to attend the conference.

## Service of notice to attend conference

Following a determination to proceed to conference, and prior to actual conference, the client is served with a 'Notice to Attend Conference' at which time he/she 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. In the event that a client fails to attend as per the notice, the Commission may re-schedule the conference and again a notice is served 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 can be 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.



# HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS

## 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, domestic violence 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 or
- other appropriate support services.

## 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 may also be 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 or utilities 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) agreement to assist them to manage their budget 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 welfare reform 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 or 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 monitored during the case management phase includes those who are incarcerated, out of community, in hospital or on probation orders.

# HOW THE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION WORKS



Their circumstances are monitored to ensure that where change occurs, such as release from prison, they are supported on their return to the community.

## 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 and 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.



*Doomadgee Commissioner Elaine Cairns and Aurukun Commissioner Doris Poonkamelya*



# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

## WELLBEING CENTRES

The latest Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey indicated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years and over were nearly three times as likely as non-Indigenous people to have experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, social and emotional wellbeing services are among the most important for Commission clients in the welfare reform communities.

In Mossman Gorge, Hope Vale, Coen and Aurukun, these services are provided by the Royal Flying Doctor Service through Wellbeing Centres. In Doomadgee, wellbeing services are delivered by North and West Remote Health.

These services usually focus on individual and family counselling for issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, gambling, family violence and mental health and wellbeing. Wellbeing Centres also provide group therapy, such as facilitating men's and women's groups, deliver community education sessions and take an active role in ensuring community connectedness.

Interagency relationships and cooperation are critical to ensuring effective delivery of services to the welfare reform communities. Government and non-government service providers need to share information, intelligence and integrated planning initiatives to form a united front. There are several key elements that are pivotal to ensuring that every opportunity has been afforded to the client to increase their capacity to manage their own behaviours. The Commission considers that the following elements are crucial:

- engagement of the client in a timely manner
- good local knowledge in order to assess the client
- appropriate support services to refer the client and/or the client's family to
- consistent and continuous engagement
- appropriate monitoring of the case plan and
- community engagement and education regarding the reform initiatives.

The FRC refers clients to Wellbeing Centres for assistance with a range of issues. In the 2015-16 year, 127 clients were referred to Wellbeing Centres on case plans. This year, Wellbeing Centres are working closely with the Commission to establish a shared vision of client engagement in the community context.

The Mossman Gorge Wellbeing Centre has worked extremely hard to engage, and re-engage members of the community referred by the Commission. Through proactive engagement strategies, individualised care plans and working closely with Local Commissioners to understand community needs, attendance of Commission clients at the Mossman Gorge Wellbeing Centre has increased dramatically. The attendance rate of Commission clients was 0 percent in January 2016, and has risen to 92.31 percent in the month of June 2016. The Mossman Gorge Wellbeing Centre makes the following comments about their work and collaboration with the Commission in Mossman Gorge.

*2016 is an exciting time to deliver services in alliance with the Kuku Yalanji Nation. Our service is inspired by Bama Bama Dukul Ngulkurr (Clever Kuku Yalanji People). Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka (Good Spirit Place) Mossman Gorge Wellbeing Centre is delighted to work alongside of the Family Responsibilities Commission. Our evolving collaborations continue to provide cutting edge programs within our unique context. Our service takes inspiration from the FRC team's strong and successful support of Kuku Yalanji people's self-determination;*

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey: First Results, Australia, 2012-13, cat. no. 4727.0.55.001, viewed 30 August 2016, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/9F3C9BDE98B3C5F1CA257C2F00145721?opendocument>

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



*this is evidenced by the consistent employment of Local Commissioners. These Commissioners have demonstrated an amazing capacity to lead their people, contributing vitality and meaning to their community.*

*Significant longitudinal research supports the importance of autonomy, empowerment and human freedom. The amazing story of the Kuku Yalanji Nation's strength and adaptability in the face of adversity embodies these principles and provides an impetus to manifest these desired qualities of ongoing action within Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka service delivery.*

*Once the cultural assets of the Kuku Yalanji Nation are strongly established within Wellbeing Services, the expression of each service participant's worth and potential is communicated so clearly that the individuals see it in themselves and their community.*

*The richness of the Kuku Yalanji cultural assets can only be manifested within Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka through the community members themselves. Since the beginning of this year thanks to the motivation and commitment of local people the service has tripled its local staff contribution to service delivery with roles in operations and group facilitation.*

*Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka is committed to local control and we know that this starts with supporting local people into meaningful activity and enhanced remuneration. While still in its infancy an example of the program's success is the story of a young Aboriginal woman who started working with a girls group at the centre and now has progressed to permanent employment with a local child care service.*

*Interested service participants are no longer just clients of the service. Through gradual exposure to workplace environments and support from counselling staff in minimising employment barriers, the development of a learning alliance builds confidence and capacity as participants become active players in service to their community.*

*The synergy of such approaches means that the cultural knowledge local community members bring to their roles transforms the service, enhancing the centre's goal of cultural proficiency while maximising the benefits of a social learning model.*

*In the eyes of children and young people the examples of adults experiencing success facilitates intergenerational change. Children and young people continue to be a key focus of the service, and in the words of Bill Neidjie from the Gaagadju language group, "The future is behind us, in our children." This sentiment is echoed across the Kuku Yalanji Nation and children remain a wonderful way to work with the whole family. In conjunction with the families and stakeholders we remain determined to build bridges between generations to support cultural knowledge transfer and successful futures for the inspiring leaders of the future.*

*An overview of 3 monthly reports indicates that the service has almost tripled its service contacts in the first 3 months of this year and is well on track to progressing beyond its 6 monthly targets.*

*The success of Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka, lies squarely in the hands of the Kuku Yalanji people and the stakeholders of Mossman Gorge, in particular the flourishing collaborations with the Family Responsibility Commission.*

*The future is an exhilarating time for service provision on the Kuku Yalanji Nation. The magnanimous cooperation between our programs gives rise to a shared meaning that enables greatness in our services and most importantly the people we serve. Thanks to the FRC team for their perseverance and belief in Wawu Ngulkurru Bungka.*

Wellbeing Centre staff perform an incredibly challenging and valuable role, providing much needed social and emotional wellbeing services to vulnerable people. The Commission commends and thanks all Wellbeing Centre staff for their hard work, and looks forward to continuing to influence change in the welfare reform communities together.



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION

## FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSIONER

### Commissioner David Glasgow AM



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 there, apart from time spent boarding in Charters Towers. He then studied law in Cairns with McDonnell Harris & Co, today simply known as McDonnells Law. After admission as a solicitor, Commissioner Glasgow joined the long-established and prestigious firm of Roberts Leu and North and soon became a partner. He stayed with the firm for 27 years, becoming a senior partner and gained a wide experience in virtually all areas of the law. In 1998 he was appointed a Magistrate and served in Brisbane and the south-east for the next year. From there a placement in Cairns followed which included a year spent undertaking circuit work in the Cape York Peninsula region and on Thursday Island, where he became familiar with Indigenous communities and aware of their problems and social dysfunction. A transfer to Townsville in the position of Coordinating Magistrate followed. In that role he took a special interest in developing the Murri Court and was instrumental in preparing the functions and procedures of the Murri Court throughout Queensland. His work in the Childrens and Drug Courts in North Queensland further exposed him to the particular problems of Indigenous peoples, many quite young, who appeared before those courts in much greater numbers than those who came from the wider community.

Commissioner Glasgow's experiences led the Bligh State Government to seek his 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 establishment of the FRC in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and the

appointment of a retired Magistrate or a person of like background to be the Commissioner. Mr Glasgow was appointed to the position on 25 April 2008. The Commissioner was, with his Commissioner Colleagues reappointed for a further term of three years from January 1 2015.

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.

On 26 January 2015 Commissioner Glasgow was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

## LOCAL COMMISSIONERS

### Aurukun



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

Kerindun was re-elected to the position of Aurukun Shire Councillor in the Local Government elections conducted on 19 March 2016 and has been appointed Deputy Mayor. Commissioner Kerindun previously held the position of Engagement Officer at Queensland Health until his election as a Councillor for the Aurukun Shire Council in 2012. On 26 January 2015 Aurukun Commissioner Kerindun was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his services to the community. 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 OAM** (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. On 26 January 2015 Aurukun Commissioner Poonkamelya was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. On 19 March 2016 Commissioner Poonkamelya was elected as a Councillor for the Aurukun Shire Council. 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 OAM** (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. On 26 January 2015 Aurukun Commissioner Wolmby was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. 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 OAM** (Winchanum Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun, leaving the community to attend boarding school and later Cairns Business College. Commissioner Woolla was re-elected to the position of

Councillor in the Aurukun Shire Council on 19 March 2016. Upon election to the position of Councillor for the Aurukun Shire Council in April 2012 she retired from her position as a Recognised Entity, where she worked alongside DCCSDS to assist families and children in Aurukun.

In September 2014 Aurukun Commissioner Woolla was appointed to the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland. The Taskforce was established by the then Premier Campbell Newman and was chaired by the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO, former Governor-General of Australia. On 26 January 2015 Aurukun Commissioner Woolla was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. 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 supports the education and training of young people and together with her husband, Aurukun Mayor Dereck Walpo, strives to improve opportunities for her community.



**Commissioner Dorothy POOTCHEMUNKA** (Winchanum / Aplach Clans) was born, raised and educated in Aurukun, and now has 10 children, 13 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.



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



**Commissioner Vera KOOMEETA**

**OAM** (Aplach Clan) was born in Aurukun and attended primary school in Aurukun. She continued her studies at PGC and Scots College in Warwick completing year 10 and then attended Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in Cairns, obtaining a qualification in community teaching. On 19 March 2016 Aurukun Commissioner Koomeeta was re-elected to the position of Aurukun Shire Councillor in the Local Government elections. On 26 January 2015 Aurukun Commissioner Koomeeta was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. She is a Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) and a registered interpreter as well as a member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group.

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 Leona**

**YUNKAPORTA** (Wanum Clan) was one of four new Local Commissioners who commenced with the

Commission on 14 May 2015. Her homeland is Ngakyangka (near the Holroyd River) and the clan totem is the Hammerhead Shark. Aurukun Commissioner Yunkaporta holds a Certificate II in Business Administration and is currently in her third year of a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education. Since 2012 Aurukun Commissioner Yunkaporta has held the position of Indigenous Engagement Officer with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). In this role she works with the Government Coordination Officer to provide information to the community about the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. She liaises with community members, clans and organisations to assist them to become actively

involved in government decision-making processes, including the allocation of funding and the design and delivery of solutions to build their own future. Aurukun Commissioner Yunkaporta acts as a conduit between the community and the DPMC, ensuring there are common understandings in regard to the processes and requirements of government and the needs of the Aurukun community. She has also held the position of Community Support Officer with Transition Support Services (TSS) who provide support to parents and students in the transition to boarding school.

## Coen



**Commissioner Peter Pedro**

**PETER OAM** (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. On 26 January 2015 Coen Commissioner Peter was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his services to the community.



**Commissioner May Mary**

**KEPPLE OAM** (Wik-Munkan 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. Commissioner Kepple has



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



been working part-time since February 2014 with RAATSICC (Cape York/Gulf Remote Area Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child Care) as a Community Recognised Entity. On 26 January 2015 Coen Commissioner Kepple was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. 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 OAM** (Lama Lama / Kuku Yalanji / Ayapathu 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 QLD Health. In his role with QLD Health he assists with the transportation of patients to hospital. In addition he maintains hospital property and performs groundsman's duties. He is deeply involved with supporting young people and also volunteers his time to junior sports development, providing guidance for young boys. On 26 January 2015 Coen Commissioner Port was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his services to the community.



**Commissioner Elaine Louise LIDDY OAM** (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 Elaine Liddy has been pivotal in 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. On 26 January 2015 Coen Commissioner Liddy was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. Coen Commissioner Elaine Liddy devotes her spare time to the care of her homelands, and to passing on tradition and culture to future generations.



**Commissioner Alison LIDDY** (Lama Lama Clan) was one of four new Local Commissioners commencing with the Commission on 14 May 2015.

Coen Commissioner Alison Liddy was born in Cairns and completed most of her schooling in North Queensland. Furthering her educational qualifications, Coen Commissioner Liddy attained a Certificate III in Indigenous Community Service and Primary Health Care. She has held many positions over the years, working in administrative roles as an Indigenous Health Worker with the Coen Primary Health Care Centre, Community Engagement Officer with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and Apunipima Health Council at the Coen Wellbeing Centre. Local Commissioner Alison Liddy is currently employed at the Yintjinnga Aboriginal Corporation and the Lama Lama Ranger Service. She is also a General Foster Carer. Working locally in Coen for many years and being involved in the community has enabled her to gain a broad understanding of the issues that affect those living in Coen. Her interest in becoming a Local Commissioner was inspired through her sister, Elaine Liddy, who has been a Coen Local Commissioner since the commencement of the Commission in 2008.



**Commissioner Maureen LIDDY** (Lama Lama Clan) was one of four new Local Commissioners who commenced with the Commission on 14 May 2015.

Coen Commissioner Maureen Liddy has worked extensively with families and children across Cape York and was appointed to the position of Service Coordinator for the Coen Wellbeing Centre on 12 August 2015, leaving her position at the RFDS which she had held since July 2013. Prior to her work with the RFDS Local Commissioner Liddy held the positions of Coen Opportunity Hub Manager for Cape York Partnership, Teacher/Cultural Coordinator at the Coen State School, Coordinator Family and Community Support at the Indigenous Student Support Unit, Cluster Project Manager for Cooktown Prep to year 12, Principal (Band 7) at



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION

the Hope Vale State School and Coordinator Cape York Strategy Unit in Cairns. She also holds a Graduate Diploma in Education and is a member of the Coen Justice Group. Coen Commissioner Maureen Liddy's personal interests include camping, fishing, reading, four wheel driving and meeting people.

## Doomadgee



### Commissioner Christopher

**LOGAN** (Garrawa Ghuthaarn Clan) was born in Normanton and educated at Normanton State School to year 10 after

which he moved to Doomadgee. Doomadgee Commissioner Logan is married to Eleanor Logan, herself a Local Commissioner, and together they have had three children of their own, raised another two from a young age and provided foster care for many more. Christopher's working life has included employment as a stockman, carpenter, Community Police Officer, a storeman at the Doomadgee Aboriginal Community Council and work at the Doomadgee retail store. He was a Councillor from 1992 to 1994 with the Doomadgee Aboriginal Community Council and the Deputy Mayor from 2008 to 2012. He has also driven trucks and has run the night patrol for the Doomadgee community. For many years Doomadgee Commissioner Logan was involved with the State Emergency Service and was second in charge. His strong belief in education and the importance of children attending school every day led to his commencement in the role of School Attendance Supervisor at the Doomadgee State School in 2013, working directly alongside the Doomadgee State School Principal. Doomadgee Commissioner Logan played Rugby League for the Doomadgee Dragons from 1989 to 2007, captaining the side from 1989 to 1994, and was the club chairperson from 2008 to 2014. He loves to spend his weekends taking his grandchildren out bush, camping, hunting and fishing.



### Commissioner David

**GALLAGHER** (Waanyi Clan) was

born, raised and educated in Doomadgee. Married to Shelley Anne Gallagher, he is the proud father of two sons and three daughters, the eldest of whom is studying nursing at university in Brisbane. Doomadgee Commissioner Gallagher has spent nine years as a Community Police Officer, eight years as a mechanic, and is currently employed by the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council as a road worker. Passionate about the need for qualified local residents to work towards building a thriving community, he firmly believes that education and regular school attendance is the key to a bright future. Doomadgee Commissioner Gallagher likes to spend his spare time enjoying the bush with his family.



### Commissioner Elaine CAIRNS

(Waanyi Lardil Clan) moved to Doomadgee from Mornington Island in 1969. She completed her junior education at

Doomadgee State School before moving to Malanda to complete years 9 and 10. A mother of six, and grandmother and great grandmother to 12, Elaine has firm ties to several clans within the community and derives great joy from her extended family. A strong Indigenous woman, Local Commissioner Cairns worked as a cleaner and receptionist at the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, served as Deputy Mayor from 2004 to 2007, acted as Mayor for six months in 2007 and was a Councillor from 2012 to 2016. Previously Doomadgee Commissioner Cairns spent one and a-half years as a chef at the Doomadgee Hospital and nine and a-half years as a Centrelink agent before becoming a Councillor. She has also been involved with the Indigenous Women's Forum since 2004. In her capacity with the Forum she has travelled across Australia taking a stand against domestic violence towards Aboriginal women. Her view that strong Indigenous women can make a difference

# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



to the communities in which they live drives her ambition to contribute to building a better future for Doomadgee's children. Doomadgee Commissioner Cairns loves reading, gardening and spending time out bush, fishing and camping. As a hobby she also enjoys composing and writing poems and songs.



**Commissioner Guy DOUGLAS** (Waanyi / Gangalidda Clans) has always lived in Doomadgee, apart from a year spent completing his college education

at Atherton High School. Having worked as an Aboriginal Health Worker and Senior Community Worker with Save the Children, he is currently employed as a Community Police Liaison Officer. Doomadgee Commissioner Douglas is married to Cecilia and is father to five children. Guy, along with his wife, has spent many years volunteering with young people in the community and as a leader of the local Brethren Church. When he is not busy coaching the local women's softball team, 'The Bushfires', he likes nothing better than to go back out on country to hunt, fish and camp. Doomadgee Commissioner Douglas is a firm believer that education must begin at home from a young age to form a strong foundation for the future.



**Commissioner Isabel TOBY** (Waanyi / Gangalidda Clans) was born in Doomadgee and has lived most of her life there. Married to Christopher Toby,

Isabel has three sons, one daughter and two grandchildren. Having not had the opportunity to attend boarding school herself, Local Commissioner Toby is determined that her own children will not miss out, and has sent each of them to boarding school to further their education. She looks forward to their return each school holidays when they head out bush camping and fishing. Doomadgee Commissioner Toby has worked at Centrelink, the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, Job Futures and as a teacher aide. She is currently employed as a team leader to Family Support Workers at Save the Children.



**Commissioner Karen JUPITER** (Gangalidda Clan) was born on Abingdon Downs Cattle Station and moved to Doomadgee where, apart from a stint in

Boarding school, she has lived her whole life. After completing a course in Business Administration Karen worked at DCCSDS, the Doomadgee Hospital and as a teacher aide at the local school. She also spent seven years as a Support Worker at the Women's Shelter. From July 2009 to March 2013 Karen worked at the day care centre as a Family Support Worker. Doomadgee Commissioner Jupiter has four children of her own and has been a foster carer for five others over the past 19 years. She commenced as a School Attendance Officer in 2014, and believes that the best way forward for the future of Doomadgee's children is through a quality education.



**Commissioner Kaylene O'KEEFE** grew up in Mount Isa before moving to her parents' home town of Doomadgee in 1990. Married to Dwayne O'Keefe

since 2001, Doomadgee Commissioner O'Keefe is a mother to three daughters. Her past employment has included time working at the local store, in accounts at the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council and as a Family Support Worker with RAATSICC. Kaylene hopes that her role as a Local Commissioner with the Family Responsibilities Commission will enable her to play a significant part in improving outcomes for Doomadgee families. Doomadgee Commissioner O'Keefe enjoys camping, fishing and spending time with her family, in particular her young grandson.



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



**Commissioner Eleanor LOGAN** (Waanyi / Gangalidda Clans) grew up in Doomadgee, before moving to Banyo College in Brisbane to complete year 11.

Eleanor continued to further her education, gaining a Certificate III and a Diploma of Children's Services, and training towards Aged Care Management. Recognising the need for a support network for young mothers in Doomadgee, Local Commissioner Logan was instrumental in forming a playgroup for young mums. She was a Councillor with the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council from 2008 to 2012. Married to fellow Local Commissioner Christopher Logan, she says family is her priority. She has fostered many children and is currently fostering two young boys. Eleanor is currently the Director of the Doomadgee Child Care Centre. When not working she enjoys camping, fishing and spending time with her 11 grandchildren.

## Hope Vale



**Commissioner Brian COBUS OAM** (Nguurruumungu / Muuli Clans) is an Executive Board Member for the Cape York Land Council. On 26 January 2015

Hope Vale Commissioner Cobus was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his services to the community. As Hope Vale Commissioner Cobus did not get the opportunity of further education, leaving school in year 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 OAM** (Binhthi / Bulcan Clans) worked as a Student Case Manager for Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy

(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. On 26 January 2015 Hope Vale Commissioner Gibson was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his services to his community. He remains a keen supporter of good governance and leadership for the future.



**Commissioner Doreen HART OAM** (Binhthi / Bulcan Clans) currently holds the position of Cape York Empowered Communities Regional

Coordinator at Cape York Partnership. In 2015 she was selected as a Cape York representative for the 2015 Emerging Leaders Program hosted by Jawun. 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. On 26 January 2015 Hope Vale Commissioner Hart was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community.



**Commissioner Cheryl Florence CANNON** is a strong, determined and motivated Indigenous woman from Hope Vale. Hope Vale Commissioner

Cannon loves the precious time she spends with her family and pottering around home tending to her garden. She has had a career in education across Cape York, teaching and in leadership roles within a number of schools. After a brief retirement, Hope Vale Commissioner Cannon's commitment to education has her currently in the role of Principal Coach with Good to Great Schools Australia, spending periods of time in remote interstate schools. She joined the Commission as a Local Commissioner in Hope

# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



Vale in August 2014, and thoroughly enjoys the experience. As a Local Commissioner, Cheryl's vision and values run parallel to that of the wider community and she is willing to set in motion responsibilities that bring about change for the positive future of Hope Vale.



**Commissioner Ivan DEEMAL** (Thiithaarr 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, which has in the past been rated in the 100 most incredible travel secrets by Australian Traveler magazine.



**Commissioner Erica DEERAL** (Gamaay 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 North Queensland Land Council and Cook Shire and Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Councils. She attended Hope Vale State School, Cairns West State School, Trinity Bay High School and the Cairns Business College. She is a traditional owner and a Director on the Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation. Hope Vale Commissioner Deeral is a mother to two sons and grandmother to three granddaughters and one grandson.



**Commissioner Selina BOWEN** is married to Ronald Bowen from the Thuupi / Dharrba Warra Clans of Hope Vale. Hope Vale Commissioner Bowen has two

children and one adopted son from the many children that she and her husband cared for over the years while being kinship carers. Both of her sons graduated from Peace Lutheran College in 2013 and her daughter attends at the Coen and Hope Vale Campus' of CYAAA. Hope Vale Commissioner Bowen has lived in Hope Vale for the majority of her life, only leaving to complete her secondary schooling in Brisbane where she graduated from Hendra High in Nunda. After leaving school her jobs have included being an Assistant Manager for the Local Food Store and an agent for the Commonwealth Bank in Hope Vale. She has been working for Cape York Partnership since 2012 as a Parenting Consultant, delivering the Triple P program. Hope Vale Commissioner Bowen feels good parenting is vitally important and she would like other parents to also enjoy the close relationship and respect from their teenagers that she has with her children. Hope Vale Commissioner Bowen commenced with the Commission on 14 May 2015 and on 19 March 2016 was elected to the position of Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Councillor in the Local Government elections.

## Mossman Gorge



**Commissioner Loretta SPRATT OAM** (Olkola / 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 moved to the Gorge where she has resided for the past 22 years with Nathan. 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.



# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION

On 26 January 2015 Mossman Gorge Commissioner Spratt was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community. 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 OAM** (Kuku 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. On 26 January 2015 Mossman Gorge Commissioner Gibson was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of her services to the community.



**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 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.

# THE COMMISSION — WHO MAKES UP THE COMMISSION



## Registrar Maxine McLeod



Maxine McLeod was appointed as the Registrar of the Family Responsibilities Commission on 22 January 2016, having acted as the Registrar/General

Manager from 1 January 2015. Prior to this appointment Maxine was seconded to the Commission in November 2009 as the Registrar Support Officer. Upon the Commission migrating its human resource management and financial services in-house in 2012, Maxine was appointed as the HR and Policy Manager. In this role Maxine led the development and application of human resource and strategic/operational policies and procedures. In the role of Registrar Maxine is responsible for managing the registry and the administrative affairs of the Commission. A significant focus of the role includes the development and implementation of appropriate strategies to support the strategic capability of the Commission, introducing and implementing reforms and overseeing the operations of the registry.

Prior to joining the Commission Maxine was employed by DJAG for a 17 year period, the last four years of which she spent as the Regional Operations Manager for the State Reporting Bureau.

Having been born and raised in Asia, Maxine has a keen interest in travel, enjoys cooking and is an avid reader and fisherwoman.



*The Executive Management Team,  
Registrar Maxine McLeod, Commissioner Glasgow and  
Client Manager Camille Banks  
Absent: Accountant Andrea Cotten*

## SUPPORT STAFF

### Local Coordinators

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

The Local Coordinators are:

Aurukun:	Ms Dellis Gledhill
Coen:	Ms Sandi Rye (Cairns based)
Doomadgee:	Mr Bryce Coxall
Hope Vale:	Ms Samantha Foster
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 18 employees:

- Commissioner
- Registrar
- Accountant
- Client Manager
- Senior Advisor (Statistics and Research)
- Database Administrator
- Finance Officer
- Information Officers
- Senior Case Management – Administration Officer
- Administration Officer Case Management
- Administration Officers.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In the last few years, the national spotlight has been firmly fixed on domestic and family violence. Evidence shows that despite under-reporting, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience domestic and family violence at higher rates and at greater severity than non-Indigenous women.<sup>2</sup> Domestic and family violence is a significant issue in the communities in which the Commission works and it is more important than ever to support families experiencing domestic and family violence.

In February 2015, the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, whose membership included Aurukun Commissioner Ada Woolla, delivered the 'Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland' report. The report recommended that the Queensland Government amend the FRC Act to require a court to notify the Commission when a protection order is made naming a welfare reform community resident as the respondent.

Previously, the Commission only received a Court notice when a domestic violence protection order had been breached. Since the amendments to the FRC Act were passed in December 2015, the Commission has been able to provide support to families experiencing domestic and family violence at an earlier stage, when the domestic violence protection order is first made. Since the amendments to the FRC Act, the Commission has received 32 notices for domestic violence breaches and 79 notices for domestic violence orders within jurisdiction.

To equip staff and Commissioners to better assist families experiencing domestic and family violence, the Commission has taken up a range of education and networking opportunities. In March 2016, Commissioner Glasgow and Client Manager Camille Banks attended the Overcoming Indigenous Family Violence Forum in Brisbane. During the Local Commissioner Development week in May 2016, training was provided to all Commissioners by White Ribbon Australia and the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service. In June 2016, Commissioner Glasgow attended a conference hosted by the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration on Improving Court Practice in Family Violence Cases.



Whilst the conferences and training have been invaluable to our understanding of the complex issues surrounding domestic and family violence, and have provided us with tools to support Commission clients, they have highlighted the significant gap in targeted support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander families living in remote communities.

Services, tools and strategies targeting domestic and family violence are almost universally designed for metropolitan or regional settings. Mainstream domestic and family violence responses focus on removing women and children from the domestic situation and dealing with the legal repercussions for perpetrators. Where available, these elements can help to provide options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, however, they are not always the most effective way of responding. Separating families and relying on policing and court responses is not always practical or possible in remote communities. Women's shelters or other crisis services are not always available. As an example, Hope Vale families only have access to the Cooktown Women's Shelter, 45 kilometres away. Whilst services in communities are able to provide general counselling, there are not often sufficient resources for specialised professionals or programs specifically targeting domestic and family violence. There is no structured support for either perpetrators or victims when perpetrators are returning to community on release from prison and wish to re-enter community life and the family home.

These are gaps that desperately need filling if we are to tackle domestic and family violence in welfare reform communities. The Commission is committed to assisting families experiencing domestic and family violence and looks forward to working with government and community service providers to ensure that targeted services are available to its clients.

2. Olsen, A., Lovett, R. 2016, Existing knowledge, practice and responses to violence against women in Australian Indigenous communities: State of knowledge paper, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, viewed 30 August 2016, <http://anrows.org.au/publications/landscapes/existing-knowledge-practice-and-responses-violence-against-women-in>



# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



## Coen Local Commissioners' report

Our experience as Local Commissioners over the past year has been one of highs and lows. We see there is a long way to go for some of our community members but with faith, dedication and patience we continue to support our mob to find the right path. Working collaboratively with all stakeholders is crucial for a good outcome. Our partners assist with educating and supporting those who have fallen off the path to find their way back.

Housing has been a hot topic in Coen in the past year. Lack of housing has caused overcrowding which is contributing to many of the issues coming before the Commission in Coen. These issues include domestic violence, alcohol related incidents and school absences. A core group of agencies have reconnected to

***Working collaboratively with all stakeholders is crucial for a good outcome***

form the 'Coen Interagency Group', chaired by Sergeant Alan Dewis and organised by Fran Maddern, Manager

Government Coordination with DATSIP. The Coen Interagency Group meets to discuss concerns on behalf of the community and actions resolutions with the support of the Government Champion, Katerina Carroll, who attends and participates in these meetings every second month. Overcrowded housing and long term maintenance issues have been some of the items on the agenda for which the group have sought assistance from the Government Champion for higher level government intervention.

Domestic violence continues to be a major issue in Coen with the FRC receiving seven domestic violence breaches and nine domestic violence orders between January and June 2016. Legislative changes to the FRC Act which received royal assent on 17 December 2015 introduced the domestic violence trigger to the FRC conferencing process. Clients scheduled for conference on domestic violence matters are currently referred to the Wellbeing Centre for counselling. We would like to see specific programs available to perpetrators and victims of abuse. The community is working together towards a safe haven, a place for people to feel safe when they find themselves having to escape from domestic violence. An old demountable building has been sourced through the council and we are awaiting approval for the gifting of this building to the community for this purpose.

In March 2016 there was talk of an increase in humbugging of our Elders. In response we decided that our Elders may benefit from participating in voluntary income management and decided to have a yarn with them about how this money management strategy may be able to assist them in their situation. We held a presentation at the Day Respite Centre for the Elders with the assistance of St Johns staff members. Three Elders were interested and signed up to voluntary income management in the weeks following the presentation with a further three people signing up by the end of the financial year.

We cannot express enough, the need to continue a collaborative working relationship with all stakeholders who service the Coen community. Unless we all work together to address the issues affecting our community we cannot expect to get the outcomes our people deserve.

**Coen Commissioners Peter Peter, May Kepple, Garry Port and Elaine, Alison and Maureen Liddy**

*Motivational Interviewing Training*





# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

## Aurukun Local Commissioners' report

In our report last year we outlined the matters which were of concern to us and said, "We hope to make Aurukun a safer and more stable place for us to live and work". That was our hope but it did not happen.

We have tried hard to get the kids back to our primary school, but in terms 3 and 4 of 2015 primary school attendance did not improve. Those students who did attend, however, did so more regularly, and disruption in the classrooms and in the school grounds was much less.

In 2016 with the commencement of the new Principal and staff, attendance did improve from the previous year. Unfortunately when those students who rarely attended did show up, they caused disruption to classes. Queensland Education needs to consider the engagement of behavioural management teachers to make sure the children are ready to learn before they are placed back in the classroom. The School Case Managers need to be out in community in the early morning to encourage children to attend school. A school bus would greatly assist, particularly in the wet season.

In May the Government temporarily closed the school without any community consultation leaving parents and our community members confused and angry. The closure seemed to us to be a knee-jerk reaction to the serious problem of violence within the community, and was done with little regard for the rights and needs of the children. Whilst the school itself had some problems, it seemed to us the school and its children were being blamed for the conduct of the adults in the community and the failure of the police to keep peace and order.

For years we have been told that successive Governments were going to do something about the disengaged young people in Aurukun. We have also heard that new programs would be available for the 40 or so youths under the age of 16 who were not attending boarding school. The closure of the Alternative Secondary Pathway (ASP) program in January of 2015, and the late handover of responsibility to a new provider compounded the problem last year.

***That was our hope but it did not happen***

A number of agencies have been working in the area of disengaged youth, attempting to re-engage them in schooling or into other alternative training programs. Some of the youths have returned to school, but have been suspended or expelled in a short period of time due to their unacceptable behaviour. A number of our young people have also travelled to South Australia to train in meat processing with a local abattoir. Not all of them have been successful, but there have been some positive outcomes.

During the last six months of 2015 the community witnessed numerous outbreaks of fighting due to inter-clan disputes. Wilful damage was caused to DHPW property, Aurukun Shire Council property and community personal property. The cost of repairing the damage just to the housing alone was enormous and amounted to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) has appointed a sergeant from the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to run the PCYC in Aurukun. PCYC have been running sporting activities and attending the school to run sessions with the students. The building works to the PCYC facility are currently being completed.

The Restorative Justice Program (mediation program) has been a disappointment to us. In our view those responsible for mediation should be more assertive and go out into the community to actively encourage immediate resolution of disputes before they fester and become larger problems. During the six month period when mediation was needed on a daily basis because of the feuding the employees were frequently not in the community, or they did not feel like they were in a position to be able to run mediation between the feuding clans.

# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



To alleviate overcrowding in houses, the Aurukun Shire Council has made new housing available and a number of houses are currently being built. Overcrowding, however, is still an issue due to the number of houses damaged during the fighting.

The effectiveness of some government and non-government service providers continues to be problematic in our community. The first consideration of these agencies should be the needs of the community and finding the appropriate way to engage with our people. We encourage service providers not come to our community with their own agendas, but to listen to our people and consider their ideas.

In March 2016 three of us Local Commissioners were re-elected to the Aurukun Shire Council, and one of us was newly elected as a Councillor. We continually endeavour to be across all aspects of our community and would like it recognised that we are here to guide and assist community members and service providers.

We would like to express our appreciation to the clients who have worked with us to make constructive changes in their lives, and to our partner agencies who have worked with us to improve our community.

**Aurukun Local Commissioners Edgar Kerindun, Doris Poonkamelya, Sarah Wolmby, Ada Woolla, Dorothy Pootchemunka, Vera Koomeeta and Leona Yunkaporta.**





# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

## Doomadgee Local Commissioners' report

The Doomadgee Community is now very familiar with the FRC and its practices. We believe that conference attendance rates, whilst variable, reflect the fact that Doomadgee has welcomed the FRC and the support it provides to our community members. Voluntary unscheduled appearances at conference and partners of conferencing clients willingly joining conference to discuss issues of school attendance and the safety of children indicate further acceptance and understanding of the FRC model. We continue to work hard to maintain our professionalism in and out of our workplace to become role models for our community, and we continue to use our positivity and support in conferences to strengthen our relationships and further build the trust of our clients.

This financial year we have conducted 706 conferences with a range of clients, the main focus of which has been stressing the importance of education for children. Term 1 in 2016 saw the Doomadgee State School record its highest attendance figure (67.8 percent) since the FRC commenced operations in August 2014. This represents close to a 19 percent jump from term 4 in 2015, and an 8 percent increase from term 1 in 2015. Although our work has been hard and repetitive, at times dealing with the same clients, it is encouraging results like this that push us to work harder. We recognise that our work, along with the service providers in community and especially the school, has really encouraged our community to recognise schooling as a priority.

Paula Maguire, the principal at Doomadgee State School, has made a lot of positive changes within the school. She has introduced the Doomadgee values which are displayed around the community and at the school. These values include: looking after everything and everyone; showing respect; trying our best; and speaking kindly. These values are taught in the classrooms, and the community and children have responded very well. We would like to thank Paula and all the staff at the Doomadgee State School for their hard work and continued support of the FRC. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Student Attendance Officers (SAOs) who work day in and day out promoting the importance of education and encouraging school attendance. We see the SAOs as a vital tool in helping us improve school attendance. They are all local workers who have a strong connection to Doomadgee, and are passionate about seeing Doomadgee move forward and our children receiving an education.

We have had some exciting visitors to Doomadgee this year, with one in particular offering potential opportunities for the youth of the community. Matt Bowen from the North Queensland Cowboys visited Doomadgee to speak with the community about the new Cowboys House boarding facility opening in Townsville in 2017. Cowboys House have taken a great approach in inviting the community to learn about their facility and offering positions for the children of Doomadgee. We at the FRC see it as a very positive option for the youth of Doomadgee.

Around the community we have experienced continued support from all of our service providers. It is especially exciting for us to hear, on a daily basis, our local radio announcer, Sai Matainavora, promoting the school at Doomadgee, encouraging school attendance and speaking positively about the FRC. He speaks supportively of us as Commissioners helping everyone in our community. Our local government engagement officer, Tom Atu, and the DPMC have also been very vocal and supportive across the community and we appreciate this support.

The Doomadgee community is growing every day with the Doomadgee State School having 410 children on the roll as at term 1 2016. The large number of children, along with the increase in attendance, has put pressure on staff and facilities at the school with overcrowding in classrooms. The increase in population is also putting pressure on all other services including housing availability in the community. We will continue to work with the school and the Queensland Government on these issues. In our role as Local Commissioners we have also recognised a huge gap for our teenage children in the support they receive to transition from Doomadgee State School to boarding school. We see this transition as an important pathway for the young people of Doomadgee and aim to work towards having a program implemented to better support the children in their journey.

# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



Since the beginning of term 2, or April 2016, we have had the authority to income manage clients. We are taking the opportunity to use this new tool to re-engage clients and provide new strategies to improve their living conditions. At the time of writing this report we have issued 28 BasicsCards. Our clients recognise the importance of the card and how it can help with budgeting and ensuring that day-to-day family needs are met. We

***We continue to use our positivity and support in conferences to strengthen our relationship***

hope that in the coming months a lot more income management orders will be issued and that over time, this strategy will not only lift school attendance, but will result in improved health and wellbeing for our clients.

We have just returned from our annual training week in Cairns and have all grown immensely from the education provided during this trip. Most importantly, we have shared our ideas and learnt new ideas from the FRC Commissioners from other communities. We will use these new ideas to further improve Doomadgee as a community. We recognise that currently the lack of job opportunities in Doomadgee restricts our clients from employment and further educational opportunities. In the future we would like to see new developments such as tourism opportunities, including a local arts centre for our community members to show off their many talents.

We have only just begun to implement the BasicsCard and we recognise that the times ahead will be challenging, as it is a new concept that community members are not familiar with. As leaders of our community we believe strongly that it will benefit our community, even if not everyone agrees with it in the beginning. We are looking forward to further improving attendance at the school and are excited about the possibility of introducing further triggers onto our caseload, including domestic violence and the youth justice notifications. This will give us a larger range of clients to whom we can offer support, and in doing so we hope to make a greater impact on the community to help strengthen, grow and watch Doomadgee move forward in the coming years.

**Doomadgee Commissioners Christopher Logan, David Gallagher, Elaine Cairns, Guy Douglas, Isabel Toby, Karen Jupiter, Kaylene O'Keefe and Eleanor Logan**



*Doomadgee Local Commissioners with Greg Anderson, Regional Director of DATSIP and Doomadgee Government Champion, Barry Broe*



# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

## Hope Vale Local Commissioners' report

It has been another successful year for the Hope Vale community. The school has seen solid attendance again this year and Hope Vale residents are really embracing community spirit and engaging more in community events. Hope Vale has seen an increase in community members stepping up and trying, along with service providers, to tackle issues in their community such as disengaged youth, safety and security.

***Community members are starting to want to make a change, and take control of their community***

In July 2015 we farewelled our Local Coordinator Francesca Adams due to family commitments outside of Hope Vale and in August 2015 we welcomed Samantha Foster to Hope Vale as our Local Coordinator. Sam worked with the Commission in Cairns and after cross-training in the Local Coordinator role to help relieve across all communities, she jumped at the opportunity to work in Hope Vale. Her passion for healthy communities and empowering youth saw her participate in the Youth Forum hosted in Hope Vale in March. The Forum was a great opportunity for young people in community to speak about their future and have direct input into the Queensland Youth Strategy.

The Hope Vale campus of CYAAA has had an injection of new teachers this year and they have been a breath of fresh air. The new teachers are really embracing the community by getting out and riding their bikes, going to the beach and participating in community events. The teachers love the school and the kids, and their enthusiasm and excitement about being in Hope Vale has rubbed off on both students and other staff.

We have once again embraced the graduating class as our adopt-a-class. This is obviously a very important year for these students and we, as Local Commissioners, hope to motivate these students to dream big and aim high. Once a month the class comes over to the conference room with questions and they sit and have a yarn with us about whatever issues they are interested in. We have discussed the conference process, the school attendance information that we receive, the importance of good school attendance, their future, and whether they would like to become FRC Local Commissioners one day. We also visit the class at school once a month with cupcakes to celebrate birthdays, and have a picnic planned to get the students out of the classroom for something different at the end of the term.

This term the Cape York Partnership (CYP) Parenting team has moved into the school grounds. This move happened during the school holidays after the first term and it has already made an impact on the school atmosphere. Having the parenting staff on the school grounds providing their programs to parents, being present at parade and at the school to assist wherever they can seems to be contributing to the positive school culture.

For the most part, our secondary students have had a positive start to the year as well. Attendance at Holy Spirit College has been positive and their flexibility and understanding of family dynamics has seen families, who have previously struggled to get their children to school, enroll all of their children at Holy Spirit College for Monday to Friday boarding. A core group of teenagers are still disengaged and resorting to criminal and anti-social behaviour, however, they do not make up the majority, and the community is taking steps to combat this challenge through community safety meetings.

We want to continue to work with service providers in Hope Vale and to encourage them to work collaboratively with each other. Greater accountability and better coordination between various service providers would make a big difference for our community. We would love to see partnerships between the various services in Hope Vale, rather than services working in isolation and potentially working at cross-purposes, even though they all want the best outcome for clients.

A great example of what cooperation can achieve in Hope Vale is the recent change in approved activities at My Pathway, the local employment agency. Community members are now able to log hours for their My Pathway obligations at the school. This enables parents to not only get their children to school, but to spend time at the school, which will benefit the school and the wider community immensely. This is a great example of how

# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



collaboration between the school, the parenting team and My Pathway has resulted in a positive step for our community.

In May we attended the annual Local Commissioner Development Week and can all agree that this year has been the best so far. The invited speakers and topics of discussion were all extremely relevant and very helpful. We particularly enjoyed hearing a police officer from the Drug Squad talk about drugs in community and their operations to combat this. We also found the talks from Dr Ernest Hunter about suicide and suicide prevention in communities, and resilience and self-care training from Kate Skilbeck very interesting. The highlight was definitely the day trip to the Girl Academy at Wangetti Beach and the trip up to Mossman Gorge. The Community of Mossman Gorge is beautiful and we would like to thank the Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners for having us on their land and talking to us about how they work in their community. The entire schedule was very well planned out and all of the Commissioners from various communities spoke freely with each other and shared lessons that they have learnt and different approaches they have tried in their communities. We all left the development week feeling re-energised, ready to get back into our communities and not only continue to do what we do, but to also try some new approaches.

Slowly the community is starting to see the value in the FRC's presence in community. We are starting to see a shift in the attitudes of community members towards ourselves as Local Commissioners and community members, and our Local Coordinator. Community members are more frequently coming to us and asking for support or advice. We have several community members volunteering to go on the BasicsCard as a tool to help them save their money. We also recently had a couple come into conference and thank the FRC for their support which assisted them in getting into a new home in Hope Vale. There is still a long way to go, however, the shift in mindset within the community has started. Community members are starting to want to make a change, and take control of their community to achieve positive outcomes. Clients are starting to see why we are in community, and that our aim is not to make their lives harder, but to support them and make sure that their children have every opportunity to have an education to ensure their future.

**Hope Vale Commissioners Brian Cobus, Victor Gibson, Doreen Hart, Ivan Deemal, Erica Deeral, Cheryl Cannon and Selina Bowen**



*Assembly at the Hope Vale Campus of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy*



# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW

## Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners' report

Along with hardships and occasional tumultuous events during the past year, we have seen progression that has left us proud of the Mossman Gorge community. We never give up on our mob.

Some visitors to community continue to challenge our attempts to support and influence our people toward a better future. We want to see our Elders respected and protected, not abused or neglected. Visitors who float in and disregard the common rules of a welfare reform community challenge our work as Local Commissioners. We may face these tests, but we stay strong together because we care about our people and want to see betterment in their lives.

Alcohol remains a serious problem that destroys the lives of many of our loved ones. Alcohol contributes to the noise levels in our community with loud music playing at parties fuelled by alcohol. In turn, it contributes to our youth dropping out of, or absconding from school due to the late night parties. Alcohol is also causing disagreements and violence in our community. We witnessed an increase in alcohol and intoxicated persons walking around the community in the first half of 2016.

We saw a spike in alcohol consumption and poor conference attendance around two particular events this year, Easter and the State of Origin. For example, only one client attended the conference that was scheduled the day after the first match of the State of Origin series. We would like to see changes to liquor restrictions in the local hotels and further support from the local police. Discussions have begun with relevant stakeholders to develop strategies to tackle the increase in alcohol that has occurred recently in the community. Dry house signs are visible on dry house properties, however, they need replacing frequently. We are currently sourcing a list of properties registered as dry houses to ensure signs are displayed for the residents and visitors to the property. We may need to consider a dry house sign that can be presented in language. Commissioners would also like to see restrictions around alcohol sales, limits on the amount of alcohol and reduced hours of supply.

This year has seen an amendment to the FRC Act whereby the Commission now receives trigger notices from the courts in relation to domestic violence orders. We welcome these changes and the new laws that support police in their role to charge a person without consent of the victim. Receiving these triggers, however, must be accompanied by support to assist families who experience domestic violence. We are waiting to see specialised domestic violence programs to support our referrals, and preferably for all parties involved in a domestic incident. There is no women's shelter in Mossman and victims fleeing in an emergency require transport to travel to Cairns.

Commissioners Karen Gibson and Loretta Spratt participated in the first White Ribbon Campaign to be held in Mossman in November 2015. The event attracted a lot of people for its first year and is proof that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated. We will continue to stand up and speak out for the fight against violence toward women.

On a more positive note, changes in staffing and a new approach to community work at the Wellbeing Centre has seen our mob seeking their support more frequently. We, as Local Commissioners, have a renewed confidence in the Wellbeing Centre which has resulted in us referring more clients to the service. Community members themselves have felt the renewed energy and have revived the Local Advisory Group once again. This is a positive step toward contributing grassroots ideas to the Mossman Gorge Wellbeing Centre and to the community.

Stakeholders are working collaboratively to promote empowerment and wellbeing in community, although there is room for improving engagement and information sharing. Confidentiality is a sensitive issue, but we must be able to work together to serve our clients' needs and also protect their privacy.



# LOCAL COMMISSIONERS' YEAR IN REVIEW



The Opportunity Hub continues to provide programs and hold competitions in regard to home improvements and money management upskilling to support community growth. The 2015 Best Garden competition was judged by ABC personality Costa Georgiadis. The competition attracts a number of participants and this year Commissioner Loretta Spratt won 'Best Edible Garden' for her hard work in the garden.

Primary school attendance has been consistently high with up to 80 and 90 percent attendance in terms 1 and 2. This is extraordinary progress, and we commend parents for their continual efforts to send their children to school and giving them an opportunity to become leaders of the future.

This year has seen many young people head off to boarding school. One young person in particular found it hard to leave his family for boarding earlier this year and returned to community after term 1. This young person went back to the local high school only to realise he may have missed an opportunity to further his education outside the community. He has now applied to go back to boarding school. We wish him the best of luck for the future.

A major concern for us as Local Commissioners is the increasing number of girls that continue to drop out of high school before senior years. It is becoming the norm that girls believe it is okay to leave school, only to fall into the trap of their parents before them, a trap that contributes to closed doors and opportunities. A core group of stakeholders are working alongside the Commission to address these issues. We are working together to develop strategies that we hope will empower our youth to see the opportunities of the future.

*We never give up  
on our mob*

We continue to grow, learn and build strength on a personal level and in our role as Local Commissioners. Earlier this year we came together with Local Commissioners from Coen, Hope Vale, Aurukun and Doomadgee for the annual development week. The week was organised and the schedule was full, learning about new programs and policies from external stakeholders, tools that will assist us in the year ahead and sharing stories with each other. Sharing stories of similar experiences and the ways each of us deal with these experiences has been, and continues to be, the most valuable part of development week. Each year as we develop our strength and learn new ways of working alongside our mob it revitalises us for another year to come.

**Mossman Gorge Commissioners Loretta Spratt, Karen Gibson and Karen Shuan**



*Christmas Party, Mossman Gorge*



# REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

## From the desk of the Registrar

The 2015/16 financial year began with a welcome announcement by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Honourable Curtis Pitt, of further funding over four years for the Welfare Reform initiatives to enable, "...the continuation of programs aimed at strengthening Queensland's discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This funding will support the Family Responsibilities Commission to build on gains achieved to date". This annual report outlines the progress we have made in the past 12 months to build upon our achievements, the challenges we have faced in doing so, and how we propose to continue meeting those challenges into the future. It recognises the ongoing work and efforts of our Local Commissioners and strategic partners to meet the objectives of our Act – to restore socially acceptable standards of behaviour and local authority and assist the welfare reform communities, and individuals and families within those communities, to take responsibility for their future.

An operational summary of the past financial year demonstrates that, as with previous years, there has been a consistent and challenging workload with a total of 4,254 notices within jurisdiction received which resulted in 2,347 conferences held, 195 referrals made to service providers and 7.95 percent of clients on case plans as at 30 June 2016. A total of 249 CIM orders were issued throughout the same period.

In striving to continue improving the Commission's ability to meet its objectives, and following community consultations, on 13 October 2015 the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 was introduced to Parliament. The Bill proposed to amend the FRC Act to include a domestic violence trigger for notices to the Commission (Recommendation 93 of the 'Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic Violence in Queensland' report). Further amendments were to extend the delegation of the FRC Commissioner's functions to allow Local Commissioners to deliver income management orders when convening a conference independently of Commissioner Glasgow or Deputy Commissioner Curtin, broaden the suitability requirements of the Registrar, remove redundant provisions and clarify the process for the youth justice trigger. The new domestic violence trigger has facilitated the conferencing of community members who are the subject of a domestic violence order. The Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 was passed by Parliament with unanimous support on 1 December 2015 and received Royal Assent on 17 December 2015.

The first notices for domestic violence orders (DVOs) were received on 23 February 2016 from DJAG and uploaded to the database with a new database tool created specifically for DVOs. The Commission's database has also been modified by our Database Administrator to capture domestic violence breaches (DVBs) separately from other Magistrate and District Court notices. The Commission commenced reporting to DATSIP on the triggers from January 2016. Monthly reports identify which Courts are providing domestic violence (DV) notices (breaches and orders), the number of conferences held in relation to DV notices per community, outcome actions taken in relation to conferences for DVO and DVB notices, the number of referrals made in relation to these conferences and what circumstances affect the statistical data and outcomes.

Deputy Commissioner Curtin and the Doomadgee Commissioners have continued to build upon their achievements since conferencing began in November 2014. As from April 2016 (term 2 of the school year) we are pleased to advise that the Doomadgee Commissioners have the ability to use income management as a conferencing tool to encourage behavioural change and to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the care of the children of their community. In term 1 2016 the average attendance for the Doomadgee School was 67.8 percent. That compares to 59.8 percent attendance for the same period last year. Although attendance will no doubt fluctuate, it is a very encouraging result for a school with a cohort of 410 students.

# REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW



As a result of the addition of the DV trigger and expansion of income management into Doomadgee, the Executive Management Team (EMT) considered it appropriate that the Commission reconsider the management of its organisational activities and reset its priorities in order to focus energy and resources toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes, and adjust the Commission's direction in response to our changing environment. A new Strategic Plan has been drafted (refer to page 15) which better reflects our objectives, the strategies employed to achieve those objectives and what we consider are our key performance indicators. We believe this plan clearly outlines who we are, who we serve, our vision and our values.

Of major significance to the Registry this year has been the upgrade of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Database. Following the launch of the CRM Database Upgrade Project on 27 July 2015, the system was implemented into production on 22 January 2016. Some of the benefits provided by the upgrade are: an extended life span; increased efficiency including global search and code optimisation; assisted coding; new and more efficient form navigation; upgraded SQL server for easy access to the database; calculated fields; and field level security. Our Database Administrator, using the advanced visual capability of CRM 2015 can produce charts to aid conferencing and enhance our ability to assess conference outcomes and the effectiveness of decisions made at conference. We will be judging its capability to determine to what extent the mapping of clients can improve our reporting capability and to what extent these statistics can be relied upon to provide an accurate snapshot of outcomes.

This year we have increased our focus on the case management of clients and encouraged communication between the Commission, stakeholders and service providers to assist in the development of an integrated and coordinated approach to meeting service obligations. Each State Government department, agency and service provider plays a fundamental role in fashioning the future for the welfare reform communities and the commitment displayed to this goal is unquestioned. I acknowledge their support and efforts to deliver significant outcomes for the welfare reform communities. The Commission notes, however, that there remains the need to source practical programs to be made available to provide domestic violence counselling for both perpetrator and aggrieved, sex offender treatment programs, and programs focussing on early childhood development.

The Commission farewellled Client Manager, Amy Barden, who was highly regarded in her work with the Commission. She departed for Sydney in October 2015 to accompany her husband in his employment. Camille Banks subsequently joined the Commission as Client Manager on 2 November 2015. Camille comes to us highly recommended with a Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Arts (International Relations), Graduate Diploma (Legal Practice) and Master of Laws. In regard to another significant staff movement this financial year, Samantha Foster, Administration Officer Case Management, commenced acting in the position of Hope Vale Local Coordinator on 3 August 2015 following the resignation of Francesca Adams. Samantha was subsequently appointed to the position of Hope Vale Local Coordinator on 1 February 2016 with the enthusiastic support of the Hope Vale Local Commissioners.

Following the removal of the sunset clause from the FRC Act on 28 November 2014, and in order to comply with s149 of the Public Service Act 2008 and various other State Government directives, nine Commission employees were transitioned to tenure as permanent public servants. Each of these employees has been on contract with the Commission for an extended period of time, and their transition to tenure has afforded them a permanency of employment which is well deserved. I thank each Commission staff member for their contribution to our operations throughout the year. They have delivered well toward our objectives and remain a dedicated team who work seamlessly together.



# REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

The annual Local Commissioner Development week was held in early May 2016. The week was a resounding success with the Local Commissioners leading the discussions and debate, and progressing issues of relevance from the viewpoint of the Commission as a whole. During the week the Commissioners developed their teamwork skills, explored their capacity in coping with conflict, learnt how to use resilience in their personal and professional lives and expressed their interdependence and accountability. I have greatly enjoyed getting to know each of them better. We shared personal journeys, tears, laughter and insights into life. A camaraderie developed with open communication, mutual trust and support. One of our strategic goals is to create a capable, agile and innovative organisation. With the percentage of conferences held independently by the Local Commissioners continuing to climb, they have proven their strength and authority within and outside their communities.

Commissioner David Glasgow has worked tirelessly this year in what has on occasion been a very challenging environment. His significant contribution as the Commission's CEO is immeasurable. The Commissioner has led us through a range of complex and often difficult situations with his insight, dedication, persistence and thorough understanding of Indigenous issues. Working with him has been a privilege. Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin has also demonstrated his commitment to the Commission's work throughout the year. He heads the Commission in its Doomadgee operations, travelling a long and tiring journey on a fortnightly basis in order to lead and mentor the Doomadgee Commissioners. Together they have made significant inroads into the work of welfare reform in our communities, and the consistent guidance provided to the role of Registrar has been greatly valued.

**Maxine McLeod**

**Registrar**



*Cairns based registry staff*

# LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK



The first week in May saw the culmination of months of planning with the commencement of the 2016 Local Commissioners Development Week. The Commission's Development Week is an important annual event for which the Local Commissioners travel from their communities to Cairns to participate in an intensive program of seminars and workshops. The week provides an opportunity for Commissioners to gather together, share experiences, learn from each other and undertake training and development. Agenda items include updates on Commission processes and procedures, information sessions and presentations by expert professionals on particular issues of interest and relevance to the communities as identified by the Commissioners.

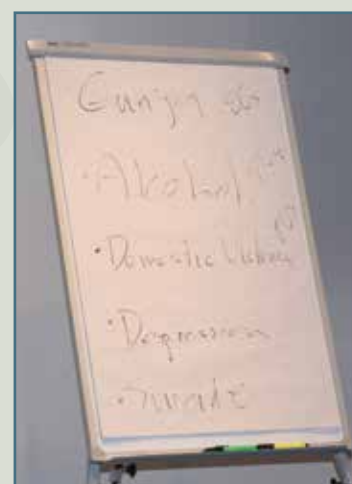
On Tuesday 3 May Commissioner David Glasgow opened the proceedings with a welcome and official introduction of the newly appointed Local Commissioners from Hope Vale and Coen. Registrar Maxine McLeod followed with a summation of some of the more significant developments in the Commission's operations for the preceding 12 months including the upgrade of the Commission's database, the commencement of income management in Doomadgee, the addition of DVBs and DVOs as a trigger for conference, and the receipt of the first notifications from the Childrens Court.

Client Manager Camille Banks addressed the group outlining a series of initiatives aimed at improving engagement between Commission clients and community service providers. Camille outlined plans to conduct a review of service provider reporting protocols, and introduce an alternative framework to enable the capture of information on engagement with clients which occurs on a more casual basis.

Detective Senior Constable Mick Dwyer from the State Crime Command Drug Squad addressed the Commissioners with a presentation on the prevalence of crystal methamphetamine, or 'Ice', in the Cape York communities. Detective Dwyer provided insight into the manufacture, supply and distribution of the drug throughout the Cape and Cairns, provided advice on particular behaviours to look out for in users, and encouraged Commissioners to report any activity suspected of being related to drug use or distribution to Crime Stoppers. Commissioners were left reassured that despite the ease of access to methamphetamine the cost of the drug, in comparison to that of cannabis, remains prohibitive.

DCCSDS representatives Deb Hall, Carita Johnsson and Tracy Cerreto discussed the issue of the decline in the number of Child Safety reports notified to the Department and provided an update on reforms in child protection. Additional staff, intensive training and development, early intervention, building partnerships and support for at risk families were listed as measures aimed at ensuring children remained safe in the community.

Dr Ernest Hunter held a captive audience as he walked through a brief history of the problems in Indigenous communities during the 1970's alcohol abuse, 1980's cannabis use and 1990's depression, each of which led to clear and increasing 'waves' in the number of suicides. Dr Hunter spoke of the enormous social changes that had resulted from the decline in jobs, and the urban drift of Indigenous people from outback stations to towns around the same time as the change in laws relating to Indigenous access to alcohol. He pointed to the 15 year intervals between peaks in the number of suicides as the children who grew up in families affected by the changes reached the age of suicide risk. Dr Hunter relayed findings from investigations into the suicides of five children in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, all of which revealed a lack of involvement from parents and a lack of engagement with school. Dr Hunter communicated the important and very clear message that disconnected kids are kids at risk, and that connection to family and school is paramount in the prevention of suicide.





# LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Sue Rayment-McHugh and Dimity Adams from Griffith Youth Forensic Service (GYFS) spoke about the Neighbourhoods Project which was developed as an outcome from the Smallbone Report into Youth Sexual Violence in Aurukun and West Cairns. The project brings together a team of researchers, practitioners and community members with the aim of preventing youth sexual violence and creating safer schools, safer public spaces, safer homes and a safer service system.

A short workshop conducted by DATSIP sought Local Commissioners' views on community priorities, leadership, service delivery organisations and community driven initiatives.

Wednesday was marked as a day dedicated to information and education on domestic violence. White Ribbon Australia representatives Peterson Opio and Liam Dooley conducted a presentation on the role of



White Ribbon Australia, its Ambassador Program and how community leaders can become involved in raising awareness through hosting events. Sandi Baker from the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service then followed with a session providing an understanding of the behaviours and typologies of perpetrators together with an insight into the experience of victims. Of particular value to the Local Commissioners were strategies for dealing

with both victims and perpetrators in conference, and support strategies for both victims and perpetrators when the perpetrator returns to community from prison.

The final session for Wednesday afternoon consisted of a 'round table' discussion where Commissioners had the opportunity to discuss a number of significant issues including school attendance, disengaged youth, lack of employment, parental responsibility and service provider performance. This session provided for an excellent exchange of information and ideas between Commissioners from different communities and assisted in building relationships through shared successes and challenges. Such was the value of the session that the Commissioners requested the opportunity to reconvene and continue discussions the following morning.

Thursday opened with the continuing 'round table' discussions. Hope Vale Local Commissioner Doreen Hart explained the 'Empowered Communities' initiative and its goal of giving communities the right to make decisions in relation to services, service providers and programs to be implemented in communities throughout Cape York. Coen Local Commissioner Maureen Liddy spoke enthusiastically of the collaborative and very successful model of service provision operating in Coen. Led by the Wellbeing Centre, multiple service providers, committees and advisory groups have joined forces to collaborate on shared clients at an individual, family, clan and community level. The various agencies have developed a regular timetable whereby support sessions and activities are scheduled on specific days of the week ensuring consistency in service provision. This combined effort provides support to community members 24 hours a day, and is a great example of community leaders taking control and coordinating services in their own communities.

Kate Skilbeck, Psychologist, facilitated a workshop which built upon the resilience and self-care skills taught in her seminar during the Development Week of 2015. Kate provided the Commissioners with valuable tools and strategies to help in dealing with the particular issues and challenges relevant to their difficult roles in their communities. The Local Commissioners particularly valued the discussion on strategies for coping with family pressures and requests for money.

# LOCAL COMMISSIONER DEVELOPMENT WEEK



Friday saw the Local Commissioners board a coach for a visit to the recently opened Girl Academy at Wangetti. The Girl Academy is a boarding school assisting Indigenous girls with babies to continue and complete their education. Academy Acting Principal Yvonne Gordon gave Commissioners a guided tour of the school and the facilities which allow young mothers and their babies to live and learn together. Feedback and information relayed back to community members by Local Commissioners has already resulted in enrolment applications for the Academy being received from Doomadgee, and an increase in requests for information from other communities.

Continuing north from Wangetti Commissioners and staff travelled to the Mossman Gorge Gateway Centre where they enjoyed a smoking ceremony and praised the strength and assurance of the young man who conducted the ceremony, despite what must have been a daunting task performing in front of a large group of Elders.

The final session of the week was a question and answer session hosted by the Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners in the Gateway Centre's conference facilities. Local Commissioners expressed particular interest in hearing what impact the Gateway had had on the community, how the Commissioners dealt with the specific problems caused by the proximity of the township of Mossman to the Mossman Gorge community and the movement of community members between the two.

After a closing address by Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin, Doomadgee Commissioner Elaine Cairns provided an emotional conclusion to the week by sharing a story of how deeply meaningful the trip to Cairns and visit to Mossman Gorge had been for her personally. She expressed her story through a moving poem which brought many listeners to tears.

This year as in every year, the Local Commissioner Development week has provided an opportunity for the Local Commissioners to come together to support each other, build relationships and share and learn from each other's experiences.

## GIRL ACADEMY

Strength · Knowledge · Future

Our mission is to grow effective and confident mothers, happy + confident children, and provide young Indigenous women with opportunities for growth + success in every aspect of their lives.

*Girl Academy Mission Statement*



# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

## Operational highlights

The following report details our performance for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016. Commissioners, Local Coordinators and Registry staff have worked together to ensure smooth and effective operations during the reporting period.

The Registry has continued to work on streamlining operational processes to support the efficient running of conferences in the communities. With the additional requirement under the FRC Act for the Courts to provide the Commission with notice of DVOs made, along with the recent commencement of the receipt of Childrens Court notices, the Registry has developed new procedures and tools to incorporate these notices into the CRM database and enable the effective conferencing of clients subject to the notices.

Local Commissioners and Local Coordinators have also adapted very well to conferencing clients who are the subject of these new notices. For Childrens Court notices, the Commissioners have had success through conferencing both the young subjects of the notices and their families to support them to meet the conditions of orders in place, and suggest strategies and support services for those involved. Unfortunately legislative changes coming into effect from 1 July 2016 will prohibit the sharing of information in regard to Childrens Court matters and the Commission will be working with DATSIP and DJAG to effect solutions to this legal barrier.

Conferences in relation to DVOs have provided a challenge well met by the Local Commissioners. The Commission has received a total of 79 notices for DVOs and 32 notices for DVBs which fell within its jurisdiction since the amendments to the FRC Act came into effect in December 2015. Forty-eight conferences have been held in relation to domestic violence notices (orders and breaches) during this time. Despite the lack of specialist services in community, Commissioners have encouraged clients who are the subject of DVOs to attend Men's and Women's Groups, seek help and support from family and community and have referred clients to counselling services at Wellbeing Centres.

The Commission does not receive details of the aggrieved in domestic violence matters, making it difficult to offer support to victims. To overcome this barrier, Local Commissioners meet to establish the facts of each DVO and plan how to deal with each particular case, considering community politics, pressures and the circumstances of the families involved. Local Commissioners' knowledge and understanding of their communities has enabled them to provide support to victims of domestic violence wherever possible.

With the support of Local Coordinators, Local Commissioners have continued to grow local authority and have conducted 916 conferences without the assistance of Commissioner Glasgow or Deputy Commissioner Curtin. This is an increase of 147 conferences from the 2014-15 reporting year. Many of the Local Commissioners have now been serving their communities and the Commission for eight years, and we extend our continued thanks and appreciation for the passion and commitment with which all Local Commissioners continue to perform their often difficult role. Together with the Local Coordinators, Local Commissioners strive to build and sustain positive relationships with other agencies and service providers, learn from their colleagues and try new and innovative strategies in conferencing and case management.

The upgrade to the CRM database has enabled the Commission to explore how to better utilise the data collected to measure the impact of conferencing. As an example, the Commission can now graphically chart a client's conference history against their child's school attendance. This then paves the way for the Commission to look more holistically at the impact conferencing has on social outcomes through mapping attendance at services, progression through programs, the receipt of further notices, and school attendance.

The Commission currently monitors the progress of clients who have been placed on case plans through monthly reports remitted by service providers, and by reviewing matters at subsequent conferences. A project is underway to review the Commission's framework of monthly progress reports to identify limitations, develop a framework which better serves the changing needs of both the Commission and service providers and enable the Commission to better understand clients' progress towards their goals and broader social outcomes. Consultation has occurred with a range of service providers, DATSIP and other stakeholders. The Commission will develop and implement the new framework in the coming months.



# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



## Performance statement

Following are the performance measures used by the Commission to identify workload and operating results.

Performance measures	2014-2015 actual result	2015-2016 actual result
Percentage increase in Local Commissioners sitting without Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner	251%	19%
Percentage of CIM clients who have had CIM orders revoked or reduced	New Measure	28%

## Discontinued measure

A performance measure included in the 2014-15 Annual Report which has been discontinued, is reported in the following table. This measure was discontinued because it does not demonstrate the effect of restoring socially responsible standards of behaviour for only those clients who were on a CIM order at some point in the financial year (as demonstrated in the table).

Performance measure	2014-2015 actual result	2015-2016 actual result
Percentage of clients who have had CIM orders revoked or reduced	3%	3%

## School attendance rate for 2008-2016 term 2

School attendance data	Aurukun community primary <sup>8,9</sup>	Aurukun community secondary <sup>3</sup>	Coen <sup>4,8</sup>	Doomadgee <sup>5</sup>	Hope Vale <sup>8</sup>	Mossman Gorge community <sup>4,6</sup>
Prior methodology <sup>7</sup>						
Term 2 2008	44.0%	19.8%	96.8%	53.1%	87.6%	60.9%
Term 2 2009	68.8%	40.3%	93.6%	52.0%	86.9%	81.6%
Term 2 2010	64.7%	32.7%	92.2%	57.2%	83.5%	79.1%
Term 2 2011	73.2%	51.5%	86.6%	52.7%	78.6%	79.5%
Term 2 2012	61.5%	17.4%	88.5%	51.9%	78.8%	74.7%
New methodology						
Revised term 2 2012	61.3%	15.6%	87.9%	49.9%	77.3%	70.0%
Term 2 2013	63.4%	-	89.3%	46.8%	70.2%	84.0%
Term 2 2014	64.7%	23.2%	92.6%	59.8%	77.6%	64.0%
Term 2 2015	57.5%	-	88.7%	55.9%	83.3%	67.2%
Term 2 2016	51.5%	-	89.2%	49.6%	76.7%	72.4%

3. In 2013 Aurukun secondary campus schooling transitioned to the Alternative Secondary Pathway (ASP) program facilitated by Western Cape College (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. Effective from 1 January 2015 DET closed the ASP program.

4. 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.

5. From July to December 2015, Doomadgee State School operated on a weekly schedule of four extended days (8:30 am to 3:00 pm - Monday to Thursday) and one short day (8:30 am to 12:30 pm - Friday). The counting rule applied for Doomadgee State School was not adjusted to account for the extended days. From term 1 2016, Doomadgee State School has returned to five standard school days.

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

7. 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. DET advise that the student attendance series based on the new methodology is not directly comparable to the prior methodology.

8. As of term 1, 2015 CYAAA moved to OneSchool roll marking in line with DET policy using students being two hours late as the trigger for the A (absent) code to be entered.

9. In term 2 2016, Aurukun Campus of CYAAA was closed from 11-18 May (inclusive) and again from 26 May to 24 June (inclusive). Therefore, the attendance rate presented covers approximately five and a half weeks of the 11 week term.



# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

## Notices and conferences by community

From 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, the Commission received a total of 6,023 agency notices of which 4,254 were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 94 District Court notices
- 116 Childrens Court notices
- 1172 Magistrates Court notices
- 32 Domestic Violence Breach notices
- 79 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 2509 School Attendance notices
- 26 School Enrolment notices
- 157 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 69 Housing Tenancy notices

1,769 notices were not within jurisdiction, comprising:

- 1 Supreme Court notice
- 30 District Court notices
- 15 Childrens Court notices
- 1005 Magistrates Court notices
- 28 Domestic Violence Breach notices
- 57 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 607 School Attendance notices
- 1 School Enrolment notice
- 14 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 11 Housing Tenancy notices

2,347 conferences were held in the period.

### Aurukun

Aurukun accounted for 1938 notices, 45.56 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 52 District Court notices
- 79 Childrens Court notices
- 805 Magistrates Court notices
- 16 Domestic Violence Breach notices
- 38 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 900 School Attendance notices
- 12 School Enrolment notices
- 27 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 9 Housing Tenancy notices

19 District Court notices, 4 Childrens Court notices, 345 Magistrates Court notices, 14 Domestic Violence Breach notices, 5 Domestic Violence Order notices, 44 School Attendance notices, 1 Child Safety and Welfare notice and 3 Housing and Tenancy notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

892 conferences were held in Aurukun.

### Coen

Coen accounted for 209 notices, 4.91 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 5 District Court notices
- 0 Childrens Court notices
- 74 Magistrates Court notices
- 7 Domestic Violence Breach notices
- 9 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 80 School Attendance notices
- 6 School Enrolment notices
- 13 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 15 Housing Tenancy notices

1 Supreme Court notice, 2 District Court notices, 23 Magistrates Court notices, 1 Domestic Violence Order notice, 10 School Attendance notices, 1 School Enrolment notice, 1 Child Safety and Welfare notice and 3 Housing Tenancy notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

98 conferences were held in Coen.

### Doomadgee

Doomadgee accounted for 1007 notices, 23.67 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 961 School Attendance notices
- 46 Child Safety and Welfare notices

457 School Attendance notices and 10 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

706 conferences were held in Doomadgee.

# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



## Hope Vale

Hope Vale accounted for 956 notices, 22.47 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 33 District Court notices
- 34 Childrens Court notices
- 247 Magistrates Court notices
- 8 Domestic Violence Breach notices
- 21 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 516 School Attendance notices
- 5 School Enrolment notices
- 60 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 32 Housing Tenancy notices

8 District Court notices, 11 Childrens Court notices, 277 Magistrates Court notices, 4 Domestic Violence Breach notices, 18 Domestic Violence Order notices, 76 School Attendance notices and 5 Housing and Tenancy notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

476 conferences were held in Hope Vale.

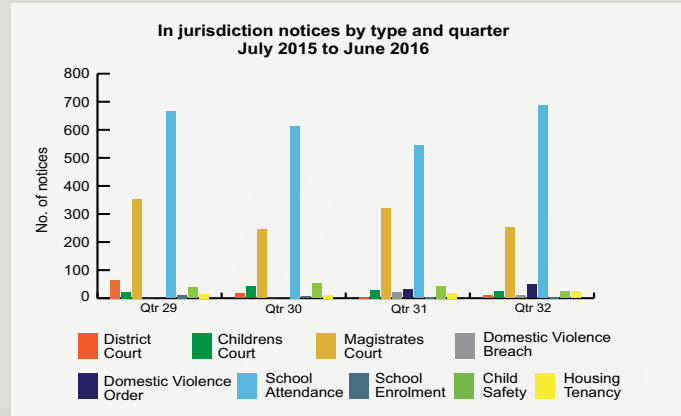
## Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge accounts for 144 notices, 3.39 percent of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

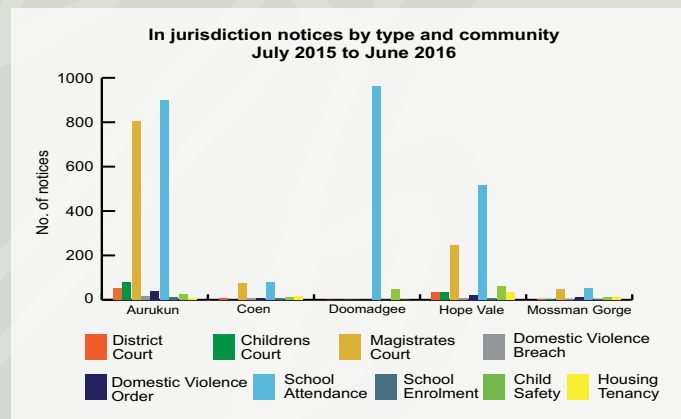
- 4 District Court notices
- 3 Childrens Court notices
- 46 Magistrates Court notices
- 1 Domestic Violence Breach notice
- 11 Domestic Violence Order notices
- 52 School Attendance notices
- 3 School Enrolment notices
- 11 Child Safety and Welfare notices
- 13 Housing Tenancy notices

1 District Court notice, 360 Magistrates Court notices, 10 Domestic Violence Breach notices, 33 Domestic Violence Order notices, 20 School Attendance notices and 2 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

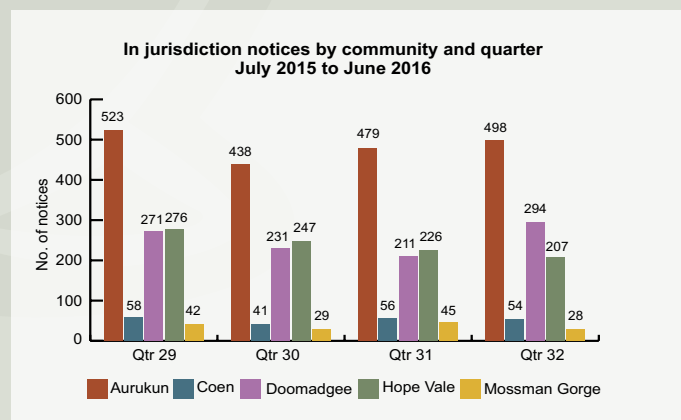
175 conferences were held in Mossman Gorge.



**Graph 1: In jurisdiction notices by type and quarter 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**



**Graph 2: In jurisdiction notices by type and community 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**



**Graph 3: In jurisdiction notices by community and quarter 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**



# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Of significance in the number of notices received in the 2015-16 financial year is the overall decline (48 percent) from the previous year in the number of Child Safety and Welfare notices. The reduction is most notable in Aurukun and Hope Vale, where the number of notices has decreased by 75 percent and 47 percent respectively. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Commission is working with DCCSDS to identify the contributing factors to this apparent decrease in reporting. The Commission is also supporting the QPS in an upcoming project to educate communities and police officers on children's safety and the importance of reporting suspected abuse and neglect.

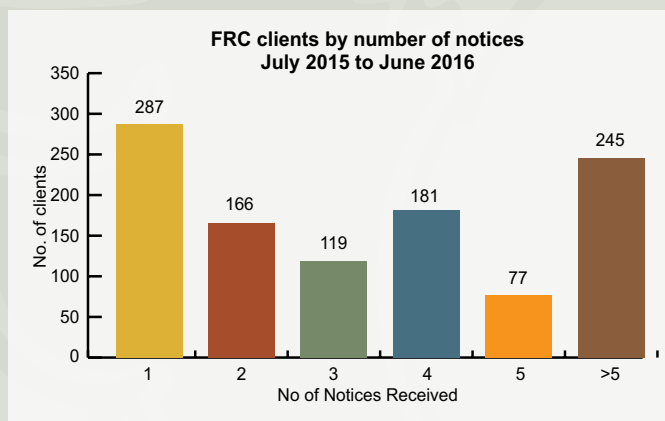
The increase in the number of District Court notices received (94 notices up from 25 in the previous year) reflects the first full financial year of receiving notifications since amendments to the FRC Act towards the end of 2014, as well as the honing of processes to provide notices to the Commission. An 82 percent increase is noted in the number of Magistrates Court notices received for the Aurukun community. This increase may in part be attributable to the community unrest experienced during late 2015 and early 2016. The number of Magistrates Court notices received in the quarter from January to March 2016 for Aurukun represents a 64 percent increase from the same period the previous year. The Commission received a total of 116 Childrens Court notices during the reporting period. Young people who have disengaged from school, community and work, and display antisocial or criminal behaviours are a key focus for the Commission. Unfortunately, as a result of recent amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 1992*, the Commission will no longer receive notices from the Childrens Court. The Commission looks forward to a quick resolution of what appears to be an unintentional consequence of the legislative amendments, and will continue to work with Youth Justice to provide support to young people in welfare reform communities.

The number of school attendance notices received for the Doomadgee community increased by 40 percent from the previous year. The Doomadgee State School has worked hard for the past 12 months to streamline processes for collecting attendance data and providing notices to the Commission. The increase in the number of notices may be attributable in part to these improvements, along with an increase in enrolment

numbers. Through a whole community school preparation initiative led by DPMC and the Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council, the Doomadgee State School achieved a greatly improved attendance rate of 67.8 percent in term 1 of 2016. School attendance fell, however, to 49.6 percent in term 2. This drop can be attributed to a range of factors including the local council elections, an increase in the number of sorry days, and a less than full complement of teaching staff. The Commission will continue to work with the school and the Doomadgee community to lift attendance in the coming financial year.

The Doomadgee Local Commissioners look forward to the introduction of further triggers to offer more holistic support to Doomadgee community members.

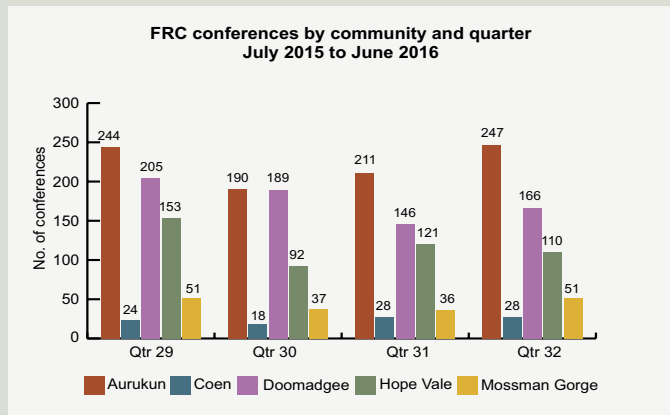
From 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, 22.8 percent of the Commission's clients who received a notice in the financial year received more than five notices. Of these clients 43 percent were the subject of notices from more than one notifying agency, a statistic which provides some insight into the complexity of the circumstances in which some Commission clients live. Thirty-five percent of these clients have received a combination of school attendance and child safety notifications.



**Graph 4: FRC clients by number of notices 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

**Note:** Agency notices are counted on the basis of the number of persons named on the notice. For example a Child Safety and Welfare notice relating to two parents is counted as two notices and if three children from one family have an unexplained absence on one day, it is counted as three individual notices.

# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



**Graph 5: FRC conferences by community and quarter 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

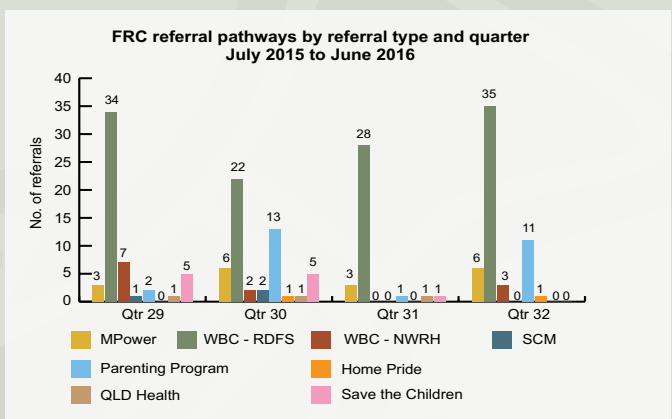
## Referrals

Referrals to service providers are an integral part of achieving the Commission's strategic outcomes of improved community wellbeing, and improved community responsibility. From 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, 195 referrals for 166 clients were made to service providers. During the reporting period, community support services were provided by: RFDS Wellbeing Centres; Opportunity Hub services delivered by CYP including the Strong Families Parenting Program, Home Pride, and MPower Money Management; school case managers at CYAAA Schools; Queensland Health; Save the Children; and North and West Remote Health.

As part of a range of measures aimed at increasing the efficacy of referrals to community support services, the Commission is reviewing its own referral practices. Strategies under consideration include more detailed referrals, especially when explaining the outcomes sought by the client and the Commission, shorter case plans depending on individual circumstances and working with service providers to improve information exchange during the 'handover' of clients to service providers after conference.

Several additional services have approached the Commission this year offering to provide support to clients through direct referrals. The Commission is investigating the possibility of entering into agreements with these service providers for service delivery to occur on a no fee basis, and considers this is an indication of the regard with which the Commission and its conferencing practices are held in welfare reform communities.

The Commission has also worked with the newly established Cape York Girl Academy to identify potential students, and continues to collaborate closely with the Department of Education's TSS and the Aurukun Youth Orbiting Program to transition students to boarding school or support young people through alternative pathways to employment.



**Graph 6: FRC referral pathways by referral type and quarter 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

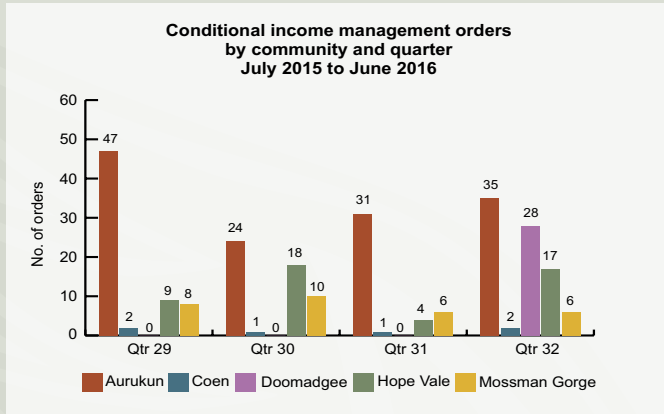
## Conditional income management

In this reporting period 249 CIM orders were issued to 202 clients. CIM remains a flexible tool used by Commissioners to improve the welfare of children by encouraging families to ensure basic household needs are met.

Included in the figure for this reporting period are the 28 CIM orders issued in the Doomadgee community since the beginning of term 2, 2016. Doomadgee Local Commissioners have approached the initial issue of BasicsCards to their clients in as positive and cooperative a way as possible, explaining the benefits of income management to clients who may require some additional support. The Doomadgee Commissioners have now also begun to use CIM orders as a tool to encourage engagement with the Commission and an incentive to improve school attendance.

Across the welfare reform communities, Local Commissioners often set school attendance goals or expectations for clients to attend service providers as a way of providing opportunities for clients to have CIM orders reduced or revoked if they are able to demonstrate the behaviour change expected by Commissioners.

# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



**Graph 7: Conditional income management orders by community and quarter 1 July 2015 to 20 June 2016.**

The Commission processed 20 VIM agreements during this reporting period. VIM provides a practical option for all welfare reform community members to help manage their finances. As an example, some elderly community members who found themselves vulnerable to family pressures and requests for money have recently signed up to a BasicsCard through VIM.

## Case management

As at 30 June 2016, 159 clients were being case-managed through active case plans pertaining to 195 referrals as follows:

- 62 percent of clients on a case plan were not subject to a CIM order
- 38 percent of clients on a case plan were subject to a CIM order.

For 2015-16 there were 202 clients placed on a CIM. Out of the 202 clients:

- 6 percent of those clients who were placed on a CIM order in 2015-16 were already on a case plan from a prior year
- 38 percent of those clients who were placed on a CIM order in 2015-16 were placed on a case plan during 2015-16
- 55 percent of those clients who were placed on a CIM order in 2015-16 were not placed on a case plan during 2015-16.

The Commission continues to monitor case management statistics, primarily through monthly progress reports provided by community support services.

A range of strategies aimed at increasing the engagement of Commission clients referred to community support services have been introduced this year. Along with proposed improvements to the reporting framework, the Commission is working with service providers to establish a shared expectation of professional and contextually relevant engagement strategies.

The Commission has entered into a partnership with GYFS to provide advice on clinical client service delivery to Commission clients, provide training to service provider staff on engagement strategies, and provide an evaluation of the success of the partnership projects. The Commission and GYFS are working closely with the CYP Strong Families Parenting Program as GYFS provide professional supervision and assistance with program and clinical documentation development.

It is noted that a reasonably high proportion of those clients placed on CIM orders during the reporting period were not also placed on a case plan. There are many reasons Commissioners may decide not to issue a case plan along with a CIM order. For example, the Commissioners may elect to develop a plan with families in their own home, may set school attendance goals which are reviewed at conference, or may have identified that the client is unable or unlikely to engage with community support services. The Commission reviews those clients who are subject to a CIM order and not concurrently on a case plan to determine whether further opportunities may be provided to those clients to receive support to change behaviour and have CIM orders reduced or revoked.

## Show cause notices

The number of show cause hearings has continued to decrease this reporting period, and the use of show cause hearings as a conference tool has declined over the last few years for several reasons.

The show cause process is designed to require a client to attend before the Commission and explain their non-compliance with a case plan. A CIM order may be considered where a satisfactory explanation is not given.

The efficacy of the show cause process is dependent on reliable reports from service providers,

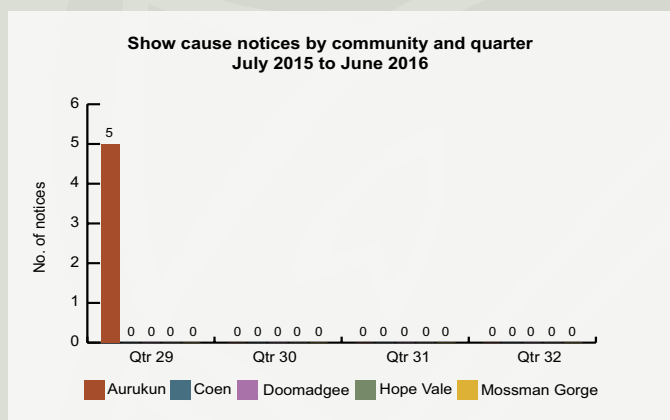
# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS



comprehensive information sharing between the Commission, service providers and agencies, and clients being able to realistically access services to meet the requirements of their orders. These factors have not been consistently present. In addition, some clients of the Commission are unwilling to attend services despite being subject to CIM orders at 90 percent over a long period of time. Accordingly, Commissioners have preferred to review client progress by scheduling future conference dates and discussing expectations with clients in conference.

From 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, five show cause hearings were held. These matters resulted in:

- 1 client's CIM order and case plan revoked
- 1 client's CIM order revoked, placed on a new CIM order of 75% for 12 months and a case plan
- 2 clients given a warning
- 1 no further action.



**Graph 8: Show cause notices by community and quarter 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

## Amend or end applications

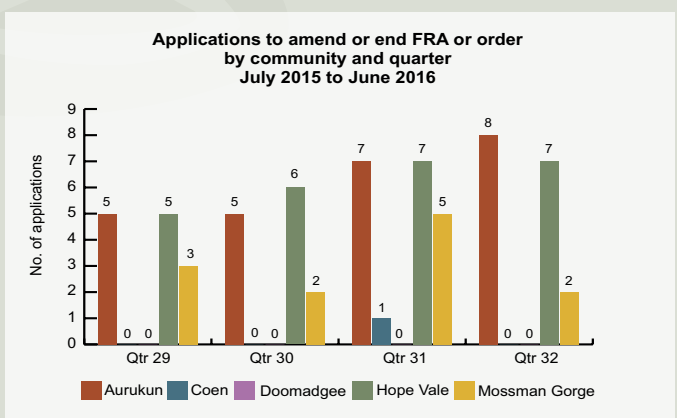
The FRC Act invites clients to apply to amend or end a Commission order or agreement. The Commissioners continue to consider a number of options when determining the outcome of applications, including varying a case plan, amending the income management percentage or ending the order or agreement. The Commission views applications to amend or end agreements or orders as an indicator of client confidence in the Commission's ability to provide a fair, just and equitable process. Forty percent of the applications received this year resulted in a revocation of the income management order or agreement.

Applications to amend or end voluntary income management are also heard in the conference setting, unless the client indicates to the Commission that the request requires urgent attention. If so, the application may be heard by the Commissioner and the Local Commissioners and a decision made outside of a scheduled conference date.

Commissioners continue to use applications to amend or end income management as a way of encouraging engagement with support services, improve school attendance, and to incentivise overall behaviour change.

From 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 a total of 63 applications to amend or end an FRA or order were received. The applications resulted in:

- 25 income management agreements and orders revoked
- 3 CIM order percentages reduced from 90 to 75 percent for the remainder of the original income management order
- 1 CIM order percentage reduced from 75 to 60 percent for the remainder of the original income management order and client placed on a new case plan
- 25 applications dismissed
- 2 applications dismissed and clients CIM'd at 90 percent for the remainder of the original income management order
- 1 application dismissed and client given a warning
- 2 applications rescheduled for the 2016-2017 financial year
- 4 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 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

## 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 2015-16 financial statements covering all aspects of the Commission's activities commences on page 75. These statements include explanatory notes and comparative figures for 2014-15.

Internal audits are performed by the Accountant 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.

### Operating result

The operating result for 2015-16 was a surplus of \$0.274 million.

### Summarised statement of comprehensive income

Summary statement	30 Jun 2016 \$,000	30 Jun 2015 \$,000
Income	4,108	4,228
Less: expenses	3,834	3,827
Operating result for financial year – surplus/(deficit)	274	401

### Adjusted operating result for 2015-16

Explanation	30 Jun 2016 \$,000
Operating result for financial year – surplus/(deficit)	274
Less adjustments – note 19 (5) of financial statements	(73)
Adjusted operating result for financial year – surplus/(deficit)	201

## Income

Income by type	30 Jun 2016 \$,000	30 Jun 2015 \$,000
Queensland State Government funding	1,600	1,600
Australian Government funding	1,800	1,800
Doomadgee funding	626	554
Other reimbursement (Local Commissioners super prior years)	–	165
Other revenue – note 3 of financial statements	82	109
Total	4,108	4,228

## Expenses

Expenses by type	30 Jun 2016 \$,000	30 Jun 2015 \$,000
Employee expenses	2,802	2,713
Supplies and services	972	1,036
Amortisation	18	–
Other expenses	42	78
Total	3,834	3,827

The Commission's employee expenses increased marginally in 2015-16. Increases were due to a combination of factors including wage rises and special payments in accordance with the newly certified core agreement, new remuneration guidelines, increments and utilisation of the Deputy Commissioner for the entire financial year of 2015-16. These increases were partly compensated by reduced costs due to cancellations in scheduled conferencing in some communities and short term vacancies in certain positions.

Supplies and services expenditure decreased in 2015-16 mainly due to operational savings related to staff travel and a significant reduction in the purchase of assets being written off as an expense (pursuant to the \$5,000 capitalisation threshold).

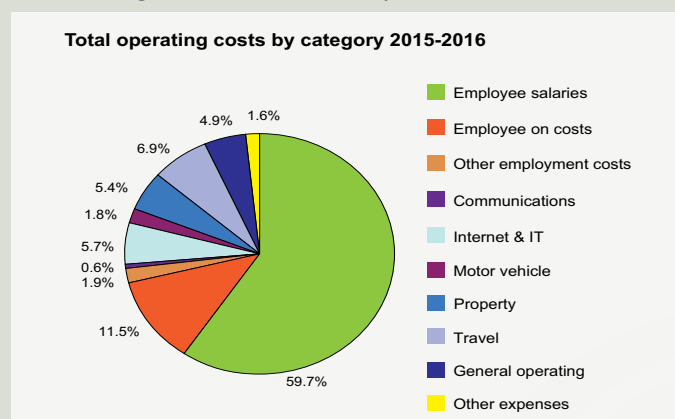
New costs for amortisation are related to an upgrade of the Commission's customer relationship management software which occurred during 2015-16. Other expenses



# OUR PERFORMANCE — REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

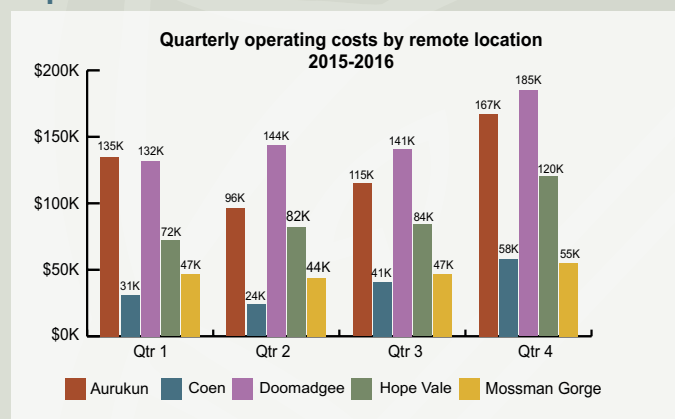


reduced in the absence of one off outlays as compared to 2014-15. Refer to note 19 of 2015-16 financial statements for the budget versus actual comparison.

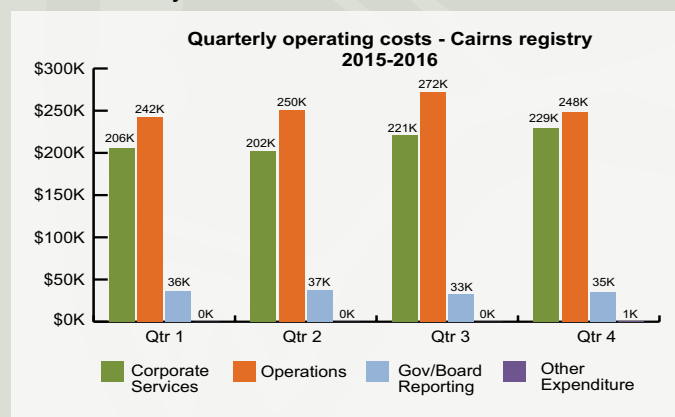


**Graph 10: Expenses by category and percentage of total expenditure 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

## Remote location and Cairns registry expenditure



**Graph 11: Operating costs by remote location 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**



**Graph 12: Quarterly operating costs, Cairns registry 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.**

## Statement of financial position

Total assets at 30 June 2016 consisted of current assets of cash, prepayments and receivables in addition to non-current intangible assets.

Total liabilities as at 30 June 2016 consisted of payables and accrued employee benefits.

Statement of financial position	30 Jun 2016 \$,000	30 Jun 2015 \$,000
Current assets	1,423	1,148
Non-current assets	65	–
Total assets	1,448	1,148
Current liabilities	335	269
Total liabilities	335	269
Net assets	1,153	879
Total equity	1,153	879

## 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 2016 \$,000	30 Jun 2015 \$,000
Operating activities	273	104
Investing activities	(83)	–
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	190	104
Cash at beginning of financial year	1,085	981
Cash at end of financial year	1,275	1,085



# CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK

## Doomadgee BasicsCard

As reported in the Commission's Annual Report 2014-15, although the use of income management for Commission clients in Doomadgee was agreed to in principle by the Queensland Government, authority had yet to be provided from the Australian Government who were in the process of reviewing the Forrest Report recommendations in regard to the Healthy Welfare Card. The Commission has always been of the view that income management is an essential element to continuing successful operations in Doomadgee. Following authorisation from the Australian Government in March 2016, the Doomadgee Commissioners commenced using income management as a conferencing tool in April 2016 – term 2 of the school year. The Doomadgee Commissioners have taken a moderate approach to introducing income management to the community, initially concentrating on those clients who would be more receptive to the benefits of financial management. The Commissioners explained to those clients the advantages of income management as a means of managing their money to meet essential household needs and expenses, thereby assisting in stabilising their home situation and better providing for their children. The first clients in the community to be income managed, therefore, commenced their orders in the spirit of an agreement. Implementation of the first BasicsCards occurred seamlessly with Centrelink visiting Doomadgee to issue the cards as soon as the Commission notices were received. With the BasicsCard quickly established in the community, the Doomadgee Commissioners have commenced extending income management to clients who have demonstrated a resistance to fulfilling their responsibilities for the children in their care. The Commissioners, while acknowledging that income management is not the solution to all community woes, look forward to utilising the tool to support people and children at risk, promote socially responsible choices, and as an incentive to meet individual and community obligations.

Initial consultations held with the Doomadgee community prior to the introduction of the Commission in 2014 resolved that the Commission would conference on the two triggers of Child Safety and Welfare concerns and school attendance only. Following the March 2016 commencement of income management in the community, the Local Commissioners expressed a view that local authority would be enhanced with the addition of further conferencing triggers including domestic violence and Youth Justice matters. The inclusion of these additional triggers is viewed as an opportunity for early intervention in breaking the cycle of domestic violence together with the associated impact on school attendance and family wellbeing, tackling youth dysfunction, and reducing offending. Doomadgee Local Commissioners have expressed the wish to eventually have the authority to conference community members on the full range of notification triggers available to the other welfare reform communities, a change which would require community consultations.

## Childrens Court notices

In September 2015 the first Childrens Court notices were received from DJAG. Following the receipt of these initial notices, the Commission became aware that in many instances the notices lacked the appropriate information to confirm jurisdiction such as relevant information about the child's parent/carer. The Commission commenced discussions with DJAG and DATSIP to improve the notification process to allow the Commission to more easily determine jurisdiction. As a result of these discussions, and other discussions held in regard to changes to improve the efficiency of the FRC Act, the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 was introduced to Parliament and passed on 1 December 2015. Clause 6 of the Bill enabled the provision of the address of the child, or any parent of the child.

The Commission, whilst continuing to liaise with DJAG's Youth Justice in regard to the timely receipt of Childrens Court notices, was advised that effective from 1 July 2016 the *Youth Justice Act 1992* (YJ Act) was amended by the *Youth Justice and Other Legislation Act (No.1) 2016* and *Youth Justice and Other Legislation Act (No.2) 2016*. One of the key policy changes to be effected by these amendments was to prohibit the publication of identifying information about all children dealt with under the YJ Act.

# CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK



The Youth Justice Practice team have contacted the Commission and confirmed that the effect of the amendments is that notices are unable to be provided to the Commission, as publication of identifying information is prohibited under s301 of the YJ Act.

This has raised immediate operational implications for the Commission. As an example, it has been noted that the Commission will not receive notices in relation to the young people charged with offences relating to the recent assaults and car-jacking in Aurukun, as they have not yet appeared before the Childrens Court. The Commission will liaise with DATSIP's legal policy officers to assist with the best legislative construction to overcome this issue.

## Child Safety and Welfare notices

The Commission has reviewed trends in the numbers of Child Safety and Welfare notices received this financial year and can report that there has been a significant reduction in notifications received. All welfare reform communities, with the exception of Mossman Gorge, have experienced a reduction in notices. Of particular note are the large reduction in notices for Aurukun and Hope Vale of 75 and 47 percent respectively. The Commission has been advised by DCCSDS that they attribute the decline primarily to a change in QPS policy for reporting child concern matters to DCCSDS. QPS have advised that the reporting of child harm was changed in direct response to the Carmody review and in line with the submissions forwarded by DCCSDS to that review. The reduced reporting in Aurukun and Hope Vale has been identified by QPS and they advise that strategies are being put in place to deal with it. As reported in last year's Annual Report, the community-based intake service known as Family and Child Connect (FaCC) is currently being rolled out in Queensland. FaCC is intended to be an additional pathway for referring concerns about children and their families. The service is designed to support vulnerable families by assessing their needs and referring them to the most appropriate support services. FaCC will assess whether more serious matters should be referred on to DCCSDS for investigation and action. The FRC Act states that Child Safety and Welfare notices are to be provided to the Commission from the child protection chief executive. This stipulation poses a legislative barrier to receiving notices from FaCC, a non-government organisation, in regard to less serious child and family matters. As the FRC Act states in s5, "The FRC Act is to be administered under the principle that the wellbeing and best interests of a child are paramount", and s5(2)(a)(i), "... the Commission should deal with the matters to which the notice relates in a way that facilitates early intervention...". The Commission has raised concerns with both DATSIP and DCCSDS regarding how the FRC will receive notices and continue to assist with early intervention strategies. Although FaCC is yet to be established in the Cape or Gulf communities, Cairns has established a FaCC service and Mossman Gorge falls within that FaCC catchment area. The Commission will continue to liaise with both DATSIP and DCCSDS to source a solution to ensure the Commission is able to continue to support families with early intervention strategies.

## Domestic violence

Following the introduction of the domestic violence trigger to the FRC Act, it was clear that appropriate training would be required for the Local Commissioners to increase their awareness of issues surrounding domestic violence, and also to enhance their capability to conference community members on domestic violence matters. During the Local Commissioner Development Week in May 2016 training was provided by White Ribbon Australia and the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service.

As the name of the aggrieved is not currently included in the information received from DJAG, in order to obtain sufficient information to allow the Local Commissioners to effectively conference, extra time is set aside during a conference week to establish the facts of each DVO and how the Local Commissioners wish to deal with each particular case, bearing in mind individual, family and community pressures.



# CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK

On 6 November 2015, the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee tabled its Report No. 9 on the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015. Recommendation 2 stated:

“The Committee considers that the availability of such domestic and family violence specific support services is vital if the FRC is going to be able to play an effective part in tackling domestic and family violence in *welfare reform community areas*.”

At the present time the Commissioners are referring clients to the Wellbeing Centres who have advised they have minimal specialist capacity to support clients in regard to domestic violence matters.

The Commission considers that priority must be given to meeting the challenge of this new referral option by DATSIP sourcing appropriate counselling services to treat both the perpetrator and aggrieved. It is understood that DATSIP is working with DCCSDS to identify appropriate services based on need. The Commission looks forward to discussing with DATSIP what service options will be sourced in the near future.

## Aurukun

The community of Aurukun has experienced a tumultuous 12 months. The importation of alcohol has resulted in violent and drunken behaviour, fighting and damage to property. Many nights of uncontrolled loud music have resulted in domestic disturbances and poor school attendance.

The community disturbances in November 2015, reported as riots, resulted in the looting of the store, damage to more than 30 homes making them uninhabitable, extensive property and vehicle damage and culminated in the violent death of a community member. Police reinforcements were brought in over the period to stabilise the community at considerable cost to the State Government.

Youth violence and dysfunction continued to escalate and in May 2016 resulted in an attack on the CYAAA School Principal who had come to the aid of several teachers in the community. The Principal was assaulted and his car was stolen and damaged. Teaching staff were evacuated from the community due to safety concerns and the school temporarily closed. Two weeks later, shortly after some of the evacuated teaching staff had returned to the community, the Principal was again the victim of a carjacking by armed youths, several of whom were involved in the first incident and released on bail. Extra police were again flown into the community over this period and the second carjacking resulted in the closure of the school until 11 July 2016 (term 3).

The youths involved in the above incidents do not attend school and are unemployed. The Aurukun Mayor urged community members to take control of their youth, citing that the problem was not only a discipline issue but an issue of neglect, and the Queensland Government commenced a period of consultation and reflection to determine the root cause of the unrest. Security assessments and a DET review of the Aurukun CYAAA campus and its Direct Instruction method of teaching followed.

The Aurukun community was placed under further scrutiny this year with the release of a Griffith University report commissioned in 2011 by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The report is an examination of youth sexual violence and abuse in West Cairns and Aurukun. It was received by the Queensland Government in September 2013, however, was not publically released until this year due to a number of factors, some of which were concerns over confidentiality of sources and the resultant impact on continuing work being undertaken in the community. The results of the examination report in detail the scale of abuse and also the passive acceptance of, or resignation to, the problem. As a result, the Queensland Government has set up a steering committee to analyse the findings and take positive action on prevention.

# CHALLENGES AND OUTLOOK



The Commission considers that determining the root cause of, and addressing the dysfunction in Aurukun is a complex issue involving more than the delivery of its schooling. In collaboration with community leaders and local organisations, the Aurukun Shire Council, Australian and Queensland Government agencies and service providers, the Queensland Government proposed a four point plan on 14 June to build community safety, ensure access to education, strengthen the community and harness jobs and economic opportunities. A Senior Government Coordinator, Brendon McMahon, was appointed on 30 May to ensure effective coordination of efforts across Government agencies and other organisations. This appointment was universally welcomed by the community. Prior to this appointment the Aurukun service delivery system, Government and non-Government, lacked coordination and leadership. The Commission identifies the need for regular meetings of community leaders, service providers and representatives of each clan to work to establish, implement and enforce a realistic and workable community safety plan, community rules of acceptable public behaviour, conduct and values, and programs for community education on health and safety matters.

These objectives will only be achieved, in the Commission's view, after wide community consultation and agreement by the majority of Aurukun's people (including those directly involved in the recent disturbances) and open and frank assessment of policing, schooling, housing provision and maintenance, child safety and the delivery of practical programs targeting offending and anti-social behaviour. Required programs include substance abuse prevention and treatment, anger management, sex offender programs, cognitive skills programs, domestic violence counselling services and programs to deal with gambling addiction. The complex and chronic conditions evident in many of the Commission's clients are most effectively dealt with through a holistic approach and assertive engagement. It is therefore vital that service providers do not operate in isolation.

## Improving service provider engagement

The Commission is partnering with the GYFS Neighbourhoods Project, and the CYP parenting program with the aim of enhancing service delivery provided by CYP Parenting Support Services to the welfare reform communities in which they work, with a specific focus on increased engagement and attendance, particularly in the Aurukun community.

GYFS have provided tailored training to all parenting staff on improving engagement practices. The parenting program in Aurukun will also receive more in-depth training, professional supervision and program development and evaluation services. Similar training on enhancing contextually appropriate engagement strategies will also be provided to RFDS Wellbeing Centre staff.

## Review of reporting framework

The Commission is also undertaking a project to review the existing service provider Monthly Progress Reports, and investigate and determine the most effective reporting framework for the Commission's service system. The aim of this project is to implement a reporting framework that:

- improves the timeliness and usefulness of reports as a tool for conferencing
- enhances the quality of reports to government and thereby enhances the Commission's ability to analyse and evaluate program effectiveness and
- improves service delivery through increased accountability, more productive dialogue, and enhanced professional practice.

Consultation has begun with service providers and Government departments to ensure that the proposed reporting framework will meet their needs.



# GOVERNANCE

## Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the FRC Act provides for the establishment of the FR Board. Under section 117 of the FRC 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 consider the reports submitted by the Commission. Section 118 of the FRC 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.

Section 123 of the FRC Act states that the FR Board must meet every six 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. A full description of the meetings of the FR Board can be found at page 105.

## Composition of the Board

The FR Board members as at 30 June 2016 were:

Ms Clare O'Connor	Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships as the Chair
Ms Carolyn Edwards	First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Mr Noel Pearson	Founder, Cape York Partnership as the Executive Chairman, representing Cape York Institute.

## Executive Management Team

The Commission's EMT is comprised of the Commissioner, the Registrar, the Client Manager and the Accountant. The EMT plays a critical role in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission by:

- providing value-based leadership whilst being a role model for innovation, teamwork and problem solving
- demonstrating and incorporating high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour
- ensuring transparency and accountability through effective decision-making and communication with all employees 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 FRC 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

# GOVERNANCE

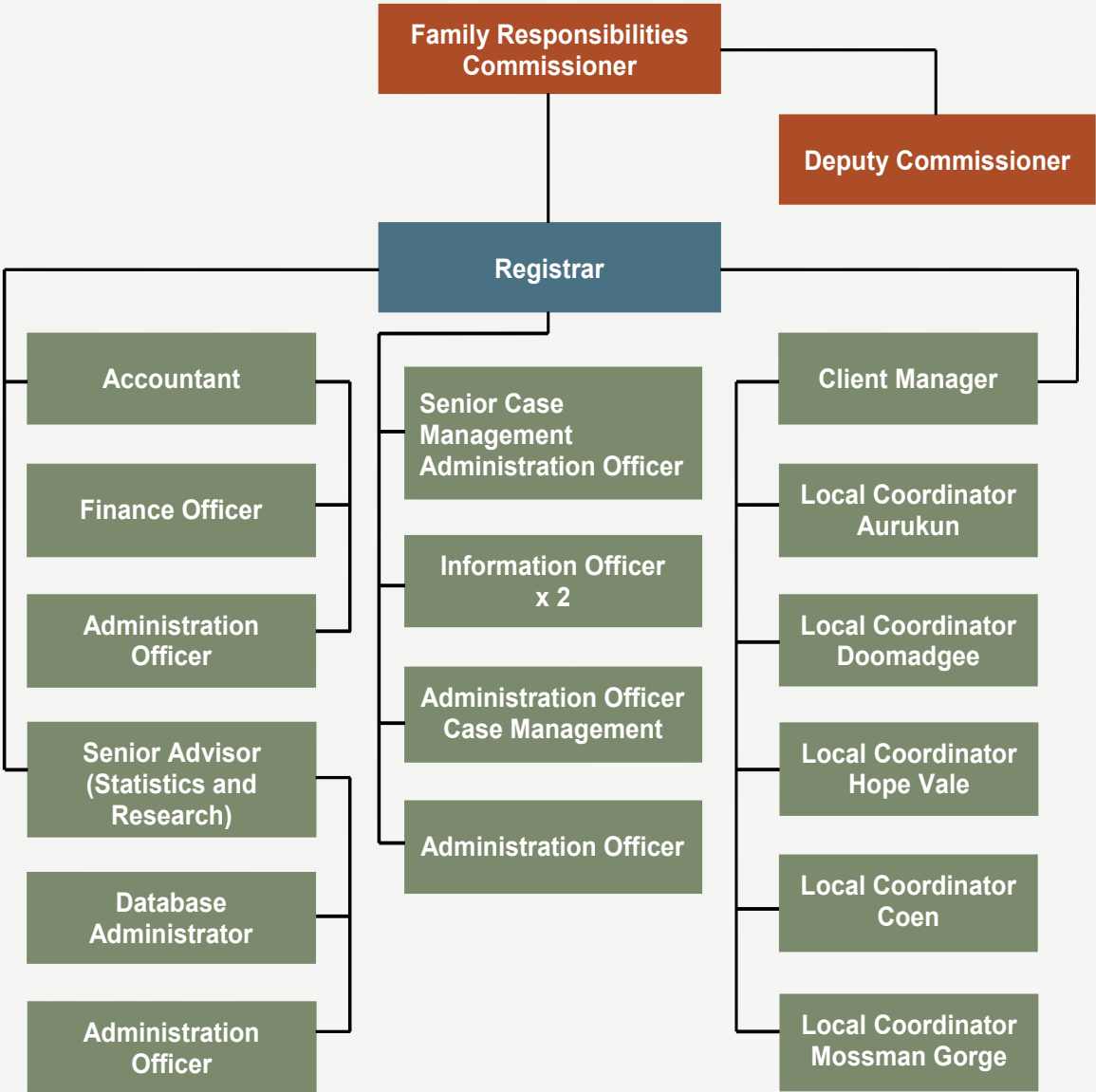


and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2015-16 year.

### Corporate structure

The Commission’s organisational structure includes a central registry office based in Cairns and a remote office in each of the welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, 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.

The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are appointed by the Governor in Council under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* until 1 January 2018.





# GOVERNANCE

## Planning

In May 2016 the Commission redrafted its strategic plan to more clearly define the strategic outcomes sought by the Commission, the strategic objectives which are specifically tied to these outcomes and the strategies it will employ to achieve its objectives. The strategic outcomes of improved community wellbeing and improved community responsibility set out what the Commission wishes to achieve. The strategic objectives relate to specific targets and processes by which the Commission seeks to achieve its outcomes. The Commission's direction is consistent with, and guided by, 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. A copy of the 2016-2020 FRC Strategic Plan can be found on page 15.

## Participation in external governance groups

In addition to the internal governance arrangements of the Commission, the Commissioner and other delegated employees participate regularly in interagency meetings and governance groups:

- Program Office Group
- FRC/Centrelink Working Group
- FRC/CYP Working Group
- Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge community safety and interagency meetings
- Aurukun Release Monitoring Group
- Doomadgee Education Taskforce meetings
- Regional Managers Coordination Network
- Mossman Gorge Youth Engagement Coordination meetings
- FNQ Regional Child and Family Committee
- FRC/RFDS monthly meetings
- FRC/DHPW bi-monthly meetings
- Hope Vale Events Committee meetings
- Hope Vale Sports and Recreation Group meetings.

## Human resource management

At 30 June 2016 the Commission had an employee establishment of 18 full-time equivalent positions, including positions servicing the regional communities. Sixteen positions are based in the Cairns Registry office (including two part-time positions and one Local Coordinator servicing Coen and Mossman Gorge). Regional positions include one Local Coordinator based in Aurukun, one Local Coordinator based in Hope Vale and one Local Coordinator based in Doomadgee. 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 from time to time as a result of operational reviews. During this financial year the Commission has experienced a permanent separation rate of 22 percent, and a permanent retention rate of 82 percent. The retention rate reflects the number of employees who were with the Commission as at 1 July 2015, and who are still employed as at 30 June 2016.

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.

To prevent the onset of desk-related neck, back, shoulder, elbow and wrist injuries, and to manage symptoms which may already exist, the Commission offers employees access to ergonomic specialist services. This year ergonomic training was conducted in the Cairns Registry by a professionally qualified occupational therapist on 15 June 2016. Individual assessments were provided for those employees who expressed a need for an ergonomic review of their work stations, and recommendations to improve the working environment have been complied with.

## 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.

On 5 August 2014 the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2014 was introduced into Parliament. The Bill proposed various amendments aimed at increasing efficiencies and expanding operations. One of these amendments was to omit section 152 from the FRC Act. Section 152 was the sunset clause which provided that the FRC Act would cease on a specified date. On 14 October 2014 the Bill was passed by the Queensland Parliament and the FRC Act was proclaimed on 28 November 2014.

Due to the FRC Act's previous sunset clause, since the commencement of operations the majority of staff have been employed as temporary public servants and recruited on 12 month contracts, extended each year subject to the extension of the FRC Act.

Subsequent to the removal of the sunset clause and to comply with the provisions of s149 of the *Public Service Act 2008* and Queensland Public Service Commission Directives 20/10 Temporary Employment and 6/14 Employees Requiring Placement, nine employees occupying ongoing and funded positions of over two years duration were transitioned to tenure after having cleared the employees requiring placement pool.

During the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.



# GOVERNANCE

## Professional development

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on a continual basis to ensure it actively works to restore local authority. Part of this professional development involves enhancing and expanding upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, service providers, government departments and agencies. The Local Commissioners attended their annual development week in Cairns commencing on 3 May 2016 during which they met with senior staff from several organisations who provide social and government services to the welfare reform communities including CYP Empowered Communities, DCCSDS, QPS, DATSIP and GYFS. Local Commissioners were also addressed by Dr Ernest Hunter, a respected Australian medical practitioner who trained in adult, child and cross-cultural psychiatry in the United States before returning to work for many years in remote northern Australia. Dr Hunter discussed issues which have, in the past few decades, impacted significantly on Indigenous communities. Dr Hunter spoke of the burden of mental health problems resulting from alcohol abuse, exacerbated by the introduction of licensed canteens in many Aboriginal communities, and later by marijuana use and petrol sniffing. The resultant self-harm and suicide which has occurred across Indigenous communities has had devastating effects on the fabric of these communities and on family life, complicated by a loss of local authority and increased welfare dependency.

Specific training was provided for the Local Commissioners in resilience and self-care, with a particular focus on managing family pressures and requests for money. Commissioner Glasgow has, since the first sittings in 2016, provided training and guidance after scheduled conference sessions to the Local Commissioners on the domestic violence trigger in the four communities which currently have jurisdiction. During the Local Commissioner Development Week White Ribbon Australia provided domestic violence training for the Local Commissioners including:

- understanding men's violence against women
- the impact of men's violence against women
- causes of men's violence against women
- debunking myths about violence
- primary prevention
- managing disclosures and
- standing up against violence.

The Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service also provided training which included identifying and understanding common behaviours of perpetrators, and their effect on victims and communities as a whole.

Participation in the consultations and workshops allowed the participants to tackle common issues, review strategies and source solutions. 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. All Commission employees have been registered for the online

# GOVERNANCE



iLearning courses provided by DCCSDS. This online learning service provides training in Ethical Decision-Making, Harvard ManageMentor management and executive development online courses including webinars for team leaders, supervisors and managers on a range of topics, a mentoring program for senior officers and managers, finance and procurement fundamentals and an Emerging Leaders Program which provides confidence and skills to build and develop effective teams. These are but a few of the training opportunities offered. To facilitate employees' development, each employee together with their manager signs a Performance and Development Agreement. The agreement 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 with the Commission's strategic objectives and are reviewed on a six monthly basis. During 2015-16 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$30,920 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.

During 2015-16 the Commission organised a number of 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:

- complaints management training
- management, leadership, supervisory and team building
- Cape York Leadership Program
- managing unreasonable conduct
- conflict resolution
- mediation skills
- domestic violence awareness training
- taxation and payroll
- advanced Microsoft and SQL server training
- Word Intermediate and Excel training
- first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation including defibrillation
- Cert IV in Work Health and Safety
- managing violent and potentially violent situations
- resilience and self-care
- fire warden and trial evacuation
- defensive driving
- 4WD training
- Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct and Ethical Decision-Making.



# GOVERNANCE

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 2016 there are four employees enrolled with various academic institutions for the current 2016 calendar year to study the following:

- Certificate IV in Accounting
- Certificate IV in Community Development
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Graduate Certificate in Business (Public Sector Management).

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 agreement ensured the Commission complied with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, whilst providing a high level of security and support.

The Commission's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) system plays a vital role in supporting employees both in the Cairns registry office and regional offices. The Commission, in conjunction with CAA, has policies and network protocols in place to ensure all 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.

Since the inception of the Commission in 2008, substantial developments in the field of communications and computing have driven the need for the Commission to update and improve its systems and processes.

The Commission was advised by CAA in late 2014 that the current server used to run the CRM database, Windows 2003, would no longer be supported from 14 July 2015. Effectively that meant that there would no longer be technical assistance for troubleshooting, workloads and applications would become more expensive to operate, and compliance issues would gradually appear with software and hardware incompatibility. A major focus this year has therefore been an upgrade of the CRM database. Following the launch of the CRM Database Upgrade Project on 27 July 2015, the system was implemented into production on 22 January 2016. Some of the benefits to the Commission provided by the upgrade are: an extended life span; increased efficiency including global search and code optimization; assisted coding; new and more efficient form navigation; upgraded SQL server for more effective management of the database; calculated fields; and an improved level of security. Since the implementation of CRM 2015 the



Commission's Database Administrator has enhanced the system to:

- provide a family profile in relation to income management clients
- streamline electronic forms to increase efficiencies in remote locations
- incorporate the new domestic violence trigger
- incorporate the Juvenile Justice trigger (Childrens Court)
- provide automatic report generation (snapshot reporting)
- incorporate enhancements to facilitate more efficient registry functions and
- effect improvements to the quality and content of the data.

CRM 2015 provides enhanced visual tools which enable more effective communication between Local Commissioners and clients during conference. The database now permits the Commission to gain insight into service effectiveness with the ability to track and analyse key metrics. The Commission will continue to use the database's enhanced capability to better map clients, improve reporting capability, and provide accurate data on outcomes.

In the 2016-17 financial year the Commission will consider the future benefit of creating portal access to the database for service providers. Portal access would allow those agencies submitting monthly progress reports to the Commission direct access the database to upload their data. Another consideration will be the future benefit of providing access to the CRM database through an Internet Explorer browser, rather than solely through the secure network. This would allow Local Coordinators and other staff to access the database on an iPad or other mobile device and provide timely information to clients and other stakeholders while in the field.

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 occurrences.

The Commission complies with recordkeeping practices in accordance with section 141 of the FRC 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 Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Local Commissioners are employed under the *Public Service Act 2008*.

Commission employees have completed their annual Code of Conduct training via the DCCSDS iLearning site. The training incorporates 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, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge have also facilitated 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



# GOVERNANCE

'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 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the FRC Act and relevant Public Service Commission 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 objectives based on enhancing and strengthening socially responsible standards of behaviour both within the Commission and in the five welfare reform communities. These objectives then form the basis for employee Performance and Development Agreements to link ethics priorities with service delivery.

## Public sector values

The Commission continues to structure its operations in accordance with the objects and principles of the FRC 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 Australian Governments that achieve the outcomes sought for the welfare reform 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 FRC 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.

## 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 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

For the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 the Finance and Administration Committee had oversight responsibility for the Commission under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*. The committee is responsible for examining Bills to consider policy, examining estimates, assessing the Commission's accounts in regard to integrity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness of financial management and assessing whether the Commission is performing its legislative functions and meeting its obligations as a statutory body. The committee is set to conduct estimates hearings in July 2016.

On 13 October 2015, the Hon. Curtis Pitt MP, Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships introduced the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 to Parliament. The Bill was subsequently referred to the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for consideration. On 6 November 2015 the Committee tabled its Report No 9 on the Bill. The report recommended the following amendments to the FRC Act be passed:

- include an additional domestic violence trigger for notices to the FRC in response to recommendations in the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland's report, 'Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic Violence in Queensland' (Recommendation 93)
- expand the scope for delegation of the FRC Commissioner's powers and responsibilities to a chairperson of the Commission, allowing Local Commissioners sitting in conference to make decisions relating to income management
- broaden the suitability requirements for the FRC Registrar to someone qualified to perform the functions of the Registrar
- remove redundant provisions and
- clarify the process for generating agency notices under the existing youth justice trigger.

Further, the Committee recommended that:

- the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships ensure that appropriate domestic and family violence specific support services are available for the Family Responsibilities Commission to refer community members following a conference
- the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Family Responsibilities Commission monitor the number of agency notices received from the courts as a result of a community member being the subject of a protection order, and a community member being convicted for a breach of a protection order
- the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relation, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships require the Family Responsibilities Commission to report, in its annual report, on the number of agency notices it receives in the following circumstances – when a court makes a protection order against a community member, and when a court convicts a community member of a breach of a protection order
- the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2015 be amended to identify clearly which functions the Commissioner may delegate to the chairperson of the Commission for a conference constituted under section 50A of the FRC Act



# GOVERNANCE

The Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill was passed by Parliament with unanimous support on 1 December 2015 and received Royal Assent on 17 December 2015. In regard to the above recommendations the Commission reports monthly to DATSIP on all domestic violence notices. Monthly reports include information in regard to:

- which Magistrate courts are providing DV notices (breaches and orders)
- the number of conferences held in relation to DV notices (breaches and orders) per community
- the outcome actions taken in relation to conferences for DV notices (breaches and orders) per community and
- the number of referrals in relation to DV notices (breaches and orders) per community.

The Commission continues to implement process improvements and is currently reviewing its broader strategic workforce planning, work practices, systems and processes to create greater efficiencies.

## 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:

Policy	Revision Date
Employees Engaging in Other Employment	November 2015
Guidelines for Travelling and Hours of Work	November 2015
Hours of Work Arrangements	November 2015
Human Resource Delegation Guidelines	November 2015
Open Data Strategy	January 2016
Domestic Violence and the Workplace	January 2016
Intranet, Internet and Email Usage Policy	February 2016
Business Continuity Plan	June 2016
Financial Delegation Guidelines	June 2016





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*
- *Public Service Act 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*
- *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012.*

## **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 2015-16**

1. Annual Report 2014-15
2. Quarterly Report 27 (January to March 2015)
3. Quarterly Report 28 (April to June 2015)
4. Quarterly Report 29 (July to September 2015)
5. Quarterly Report 30 (October to December 2015)
6. Quarterly Report 31 (January to March 2016)

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



# LOCAL COORDINATOR PROFILE

## LOCAL COORDINATOR PROFILE

### Profile: Hope Vale Local Coordinator Samantha Foster

Samantha Foster is the Family Responsibilities Commission's Hope Vale Local Coordinator and has been working in the community of Hope Vale since August 2015. Originally employed as an Administration Officer (Case Management) in the Cairns registry, Sam expressed interest in travelling out to the communities. She was able to travel to Aurukun, Mossman Gorge and Hope Vale to 'learn the ropes' and assist with conferencing in community. When the Hope Vale Local Coordinator position became available Sam jumped at the opportunity and after working in a relief capacity for a few months was thrilled to be offered the role with the full support of the Hope Vale Local Commissioners.



Sam was born in Cairns, Queensland, and apart from a short stint in Brisbane for two years and her recent move to Hope Vale and then Cooktown, has lived in Cairns her entire life. After graduating high school she worked for many years in the retail and customer service industry. Seeking to gain work experience outside of the retail industry, Sam completed a Certificate IV in Mental Health which enabled her to gain a role with an organisation tasked with arranging respite for carers in Cairns and throughout the Cape. This position provided the opportunity for travel to different communities to assist in delivering dementia education to community members, and to educate carers on self-care and the importance of respite. The role, which saw her working in a day respite facility and working with people towards the end of their life, prompted a major mindset and lifestyle change in Sam. It was at this time she decided to take control of her life and take better care of herself. After losing 60 kilograms she feels like a new person and has a passion for health, fitness and overall wellness.



*Sam competing in the Great Barrier Reef Marathon Festival at Port Douglas in 2015*

*Photograph courtesy of Marathon Photos [www.Marathon-Photos.Com](http://www.Marathon-Photos.Com)*

Sam loves playing Australian Football League (AFL) and her team won the AFL Cairns Women's League Premiership in 2015. She also completed her first half marathon last year and plans to complete her first marathon at the end of 2016.

Sam's passion for working with people and enriching the lives of others is what led her to the role of Local Coordinator in Hope Vale where she hopes to motivate others to live life to their full potential. She feels that engaging the youth within the community and assisting them to understand how what they eat can affect them, and to take charge of what they put into their bodies is very important. It is Sam's goal to see community run events based around active living and healthy food choices being held in Hope Vale before the end of the year.

**Family Responsibilities Commission  
financial statements**

**for the financial year ended 30 June 2016**



## Family Responsibilities Commission

Cairns Commonwealth Centre  
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Cairns Qld 4870  
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19 August 2016

The Honourable Curtis Pitt MP  
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships  
PO Box 314  
GORDONVALE QLD 4865

Dear Minister Pitt

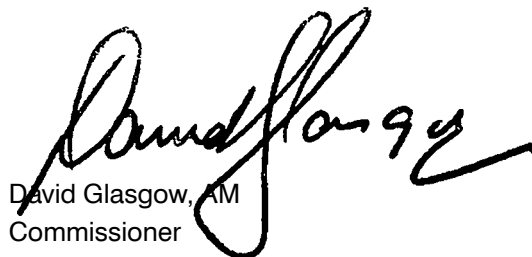
I am pleased to present the Financial Statements for the Annual Report 2015-2016 for the Family Responsibilities Commission.

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*.

The 2015-2016 Annual Report can be accessed at <http://www.frcq.org.au> after 30 October 2016.

Yours sincerely



David Glasgow, AM  
Commissioner  
Family Responsibilities Commission

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page No</u></b>
Statement of Comprehensive Income	78
Statement of Financial Position	79
Statement of Changes in Equity	80
Statement of Cash Flows	81
Notes To and Forming Part of the Financial Statements	82
Management Certificate	102
Independent Auditor's Report	103

## **General Information**

These financial statements cover the Family Responsibilities Commission. It has no controlled entities.

The Commission is an independent statutory body established under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*.

The Commission is controlled by the State of Queensland which is the ultimate parent.

The head office and principal place of business of the Commission is:

Level 3, Commonwealth Building, 107 Lake Street  
CAIRNS QLD 4870

A description of the nature of the Commission's operations and its principal activities is included in the notes to the financial statements.

For information in relation to the Commission's financial report, please call 07 4057 3875, email [Andrea.Cotten@frcq.org.au](mailto:Andrea.Cotten@frcq.org.au) or visit the Commission's internet site [www.frcq.org.au](http://www.frcq.org.au).

# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2016

	Notes	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>Income</b>			
<b>Revenue</b>			
Grants and other contributions	2	4,026	4,119
Other revenue	3	82	109
<b>Total income</b>		<u>4,108</u>	<u>4,228</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee expenses	4	2,802	2,713
Supplies and services	5	972	1,036
Amortisation	6	18	-
Other expenses	7	42	78
<b>Total expenses</b>		<u>3,834</u>	<u>3,827</u>
<b>Operating result</b>		<u>274</u>	<u>401</u>
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<u>274</u>	<u>401</u>

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

QAO  
certified statements

## Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2016

	Notes	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,275	1,085
Receivables	9	110	26
Other current assets	10	38	37
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>1,423</b>	<b>1,148</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Intangible assets	11	65	-
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>1,488</b>	<b>1,148</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	12	155	91
Accrued employee benefits	13	180	178
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>335</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>335</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,153</b>	<b>879</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Accumulated surplus		1,153	879
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,153</b>	<b>879</b>

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2016

	TOTAL
<b>Accumulated surplus</b>	<b>\$000</b>
<b>2016</b>	
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2015</b>	879
Operating result	274
Total other comprehensive income	-
	<hr/>
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2016</b>	<b>1,153</b>
	<hr/>
<b>2015</b>	
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2014</b>	478
Operating result	401
Total other comprehensive income	-
	<hr/>
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2015</b>	<b>879</b>
	<hr/>

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*



## Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2016

	Notes	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
<i>Inflows:</i>			
Grants and other contributions		3,926	4,119
Interest receipts		20	32
Other receipts		78	57
GST input tax credits from ATO		102	101
<i>Outflows:</i>			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(3,852)	(4,204)
GST remitted to ATO		(1)	(1)
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	14	273	104
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Acquisition of intangible assets		(83)	-
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		(83)	-
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>		190	104
<b>Cash at beginning of financial year</b>		1,085	981
<b>Cash at end of financial year</b>	8	1,275	1,085

*The accompanying notes form part of these statements.*

## Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements 2015-16

- Objectives and principal activities of the Commission
- Note 1: Summary of significant accounting policies
- Note 2: Grants and other contributions
- Note 3: Other revenue
- Note 4: Employee expenses
- Note 5: Supplies and services
- Note 6: Amortisation
- Note 7: Other expenses
- Note 8: Cash and cash equivalents
- Note 9: Receivables
- Note 10: Other current assets
- Note 11: Intangible assets
- Note 12: Payables
- Note 13: Accrued employee benefits
- Note 14: Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities
- Note 15: Commitments for expenditure
- Note 16: Contingencies
- Note 17: Events occurring after balance date
- Note 18: Financial instruments
- Note 19: Budget versus actual comparison

## Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements 2015-16

### Objectives and principal activities of the Family Responsibilities Commission

The Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission) was established through the enactment of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* on 13 March 2008. The Commission commenced operating on 1 July 2008.

The Commission is a key component of the Welfare Reforms.

The Commission is an independent statutory body consisting of a Family Responsibilities Commission Governing Board which comprises representatives from the Queensland Government Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Cape York Institute. The Commission's Chief Executive is a legally qualified Commissioner. There are Local Commissioners for each Welfare Reform community. All Commissioners were appointed by the Governor in Council. The Commission's central registry is based in Cairns and it has regional offices in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale, Mossman Gorge and Doomadgee.

The Commission supports the rebuilding of social norms in the five Welfare Reform communities by:

- rebuilding local authority and promoting respect;
- conducting client conferencing at which community values and the expected behaviour of individuals, families and households are discussed;
- determining appropriate actions to address the dysfunctional behaviour of people in the community;
- where appropriate, referring individuals to community support services to assist them to address their behaviours; and
- where appropriate, directing the person's income to be managed by Centrelink to pay for the priority needs of their family.

The Commission is funded for the outputs it delivers by parliamentary appropriations to -

- (a) support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas; and
- (b) help people in welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of the community.

The objectives to be achieved by the Commission are -

- (a) holding conferences about Commission notices; and
- (b) dealing with the matters to which the notices relate in a way that -
  - (i) encourages community members who are the subject of a conference to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour; and
  - (ii) promotes the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living within welfare reform community areas.

## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies

### (a) Basis of preparation and statement of compliance

The Commission is a Statutory Body under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982* and these financial statements have been prepared in accordance with section 43 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*.

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements, and have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with *Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations*. In addition, the financial statements comply with Treasury's Minimum Reporting Requirements for the year ending 30 June 2016, and other authoritative pronouncements.

With respect to compliance with *Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations*, the Commission has applied those requirements applicable to not-for-profit entities, as the Commission is a not-for-profit authority. Except where stated, the historical cost convention is used.

The Commission does not have any controlled entities.

The Commission is an independent statutory body established under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*.

The Commission is controlled by the State of Queensland which is the ultimate parent.

The head office and principal place of business of the Commission is:

Level 3, Commonwealth Building, 107 Lake Street  
CAIRNS QLD 4870

### (b) Date of authorisation

The financial statements were authorised for issue on the date that the management certificate was signed.

### (c) Grants and other contributions

Grants and contributions which are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the Commission obtains control over them. Where grants are received that are reciprocal in nature, revenue is recognised as the various performance obligations under the funding agreement are fulfilled.

Contributed assets are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are recognised only when a fair value can be determined reliably and the services would be purchased if they had not been donated. Where this is the case, an equal amount is recognised as a revenue and an expense.

### (d) Cash and cash equivalents

For the purposes of the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Cash Flows, cash assets include all cash and cheques receipted but not banked at 30 June as well as deposits at call with financial institutions and other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

**1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)****(e) Receivables**

Trade debtors are recognised at the amounts due at the time of sale or service delivery, i.e. the agreed purchase/contract price. Settlement of these amounts is required within 30 days from invoice date.

The collectability of receivables is assessed periodically and if there is objective evidence that the Commission will not be able to collect all amounts due, the carrying amount is reduced for impairment. No allowance for impairment has been made as at balance date. All known bad debts were written off at year end.

**(f) Acquisitions of assets**

Actual cost is used for the initial recording of all non-current physical and intangible asset acquisitions. Cost is determined as the fair value given as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition, including all other costs incurred in getting the assets ready for use. However, any training costs are expensed as incurred.

**(g) Property, plant and equipment**

Items of plant and equipment comprising leasehold improvements and computer equipment with a cost equal to or in excess of \$5,000 are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition. Items with a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition. No property, plant and equipment assets have been classified as held for sale or form part of a disposal group held for sale.

**(h) Intangible assets**

Intangible assets with a cost or other value equal to or greater than \$10,000 are recognised in the financial statements, items with a lesser value being expensed. Each intangible asset, less any anticipated residual value, is amortised over its estimated useful life to the Commission. The residual value is zero for all the Commission's intangible assets.

No intangible assets have been classified as held for sale or form part of a disposal group held for sale.

**(i) Leases**

A distinction is made in the financial statements between finance leases that effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all risks and benefits incidental to ownership, and operating leases, under which the lessor retains substantially all risks and benefits.

Where a non-current asset is acquired by means of a finance lease, the asset is recognised at the lower of the fair value of the leased property and the present value of the minimum lease payments. The liability is recognised at the same amount. There were no finance leases during the year.

## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)

### (i) Leases (cont'd)

Operating lease payments are representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets and are expensed in the periods in which they are incurred.

### (j) Payables

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the agreed purchase/contract price, net of applicable trade and other discounts. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

### (k) Financial instruments

#### *Recognition*

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position when the Commission becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

#### *Classification*

Financial instruments are classified and measured as follows:

- cash and cash equivalents
- receivables - held at amortised cost
- payables - held at amortised cost.

The Commission does not enter transactions for speculative purposes, nor for hedging. The Commission holds no financial assets classified at fair value through profit or loss.

All disclosures relating to the measurement basis and financial risk management of financial instruments held by the Commission are included in Note 18.

### (l) Employee benefits

Employer superannuation contributions and long service leave levies are regarded as employee benefits.

Payroll tax and workers' compensation insurance are a consequence of employing employees, but are not counted in an employee's total remuneration package. They are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as employee related expenses.

#### *Wages, salaries, recreation leave and sick leave*

Wages, salaries and recreation leave due but unpaid at reporting date are recognised in current liabilities at the current salary rates.

For unpaid entitlements expected to be paid within 12 months, the liabilities are recognised at their undiscounted values. Entitlements not expected to be paid within 12 months are recognised at their present value, calculated using yields on Fixed Rate Australian Government bonds of similar maturity, after projecting the remuneration rates expected to apply at the time of likely settlement.

## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)

### (l) Employee benefits (cont'd)

Prior history indicates that on average, sick leave taken in each reporting period is less than the entitlement accrued. This is expected to continue in future periods. Accordingly, it is unlikely that existing accumulated entitlements will be used by employees and no liability for unused sick leave entitlements is recognised.

As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

#### *Long service leave*

Under the Queensland Government's long service leave scheme, a levy is made on the Commission to cover the cost of employees' long service leave. The levies are expensed in the period in which they are payable. Amounts paid to employees for long service leave are claimed from the scheme quarterly in arrears.

No provision for long service leave is recognised in the Commission's financial statements, the liability being held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and general Government sector financial reporting*.

#### *Superannuation - Local Commissioners*

Obligations for contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as a personnel expense in the periods during which services are rendered by employees. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in future payments is available. Contributions to a defined contribution plan that are due more than 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the service are discounted to their present value.

#### *Superannuation - all other employees*

Employer superannuation contributions are paid to QSuper, the superannuation scheme for Queensland Government employees, at rates determined by the Treasurer on the advice of the State Actuary. Contributions are expensed in the period in which they are paid or payable. The Commission's obligation is limited to its contribution to QSuper.

No liability is therefore recognised for accruing superannuation benefits in the Commission's financial statements, the liability being held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and general Government sector financial reporting*.

### (m) Key executive management personnel and remuneration

Key executive management personnel and remuneration disclosures are made in accordance with section 5 of the *Financial reporting requirements for Queensland Government agencies* issued by Queensland Treasury. Refer to note 4 for the disclosures on key executive management personnel and remuneration.

### (n) Insurance

The Commission's risks are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund, premiums being paid on a risk assessment basis. In addition, the Commission pays premiums to Workcover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee compensation.

## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)

### (o) Taxation

The Commission is a State body as defined under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* and is exempt from Australian Government taxation with the exception of fringe benefits tax (FBT) and goods and services tax (GST). The net amount of GST recoverable from the ATO or payable to the ATO is shown as an asset or liability respectively.

### (p) Accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements necessarily requires the determination and use of certain critical accounting estimates, assumptions, and management judgements that have the potential to cause a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year. Such estimates, judgements and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in future periods as relevant.

Management is not aware of any assumptions and estimation uncertainties that have a significant risk of resulting in a material adjustment within the next financial year.

### (q) Other presentation matters

*Currency and rounding* - Amounts included in the financial statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where that amount is \$500 or less, to zero, unless disclosure of the full amount is specifically required.

*Comparatives* - Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current reporting period.

### (r) Finance income

Finance income comprises interest income on funds invested. Interest income is recognised as it accrues using the effective interest method.

### (s) New and revised accounting standards

In the current year, the Commission adopted all of the new and revised Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are relevant to its operations and effective for the current reporting period. No new or revised standards and interpretations had a material impact on the financial statements.

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, a number of new standards and interpretations were in issue but not yet effective. None of these have been early adopted by the Commission. The Commission applies standards and interpretations in accordance with their respective commencement dates.



## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)

### (s) New and revised accounting standards (cont'd)

Of the new standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective, none are expected to have a material impact on the Commission's future financial statements, except for:

#### **AASB 124 *Related party disclosures***

Effective from reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2016, a revised version of AASB 124 will apply to the Commission. AASB 124 requires disclosures about the remuneration of key management personnel (KMP), transactions with related parties, and relationships between parent and controlled entities.

The Commission already discloses detailed information about remuneration of its KMP, based on Queensland Treasury's financial reporting requirements for Queensland Government agencies. Due to the additional guidance about the KMP definition in the revised AASB 124, the Commission will be assessing whether its responsible Minister should be part of its KMP from 2016-17. If the responsible Minister is assessed as meeting the KMP definition, no associated remuneration figures will be disclosed by the Commission, as it does not provide the Minister's remuneration. Comparative information will continue to be disclosed in respect of KMP remuneration.

The most significant implications of AASB 124 for the Commission are the required disclosures about transactions between the Commission and its related parties (as defined in AASB 124). For any such transactions, from 2016-17, disclosures will include the nature of the related party relationship, as well as information about those transactions' terms/conditions and amounts, any guarantees given/received, outstanding receivables/payables, commitments, and any receivables where collection has been assessed as being doubtful. In respect of related party transactions with other Queensland Government controlled entities, the information disclosed will be more high level, unless a transaction is individually significant. No comparative information is required in respect of related party transactions in the 2016-17 financial statements.

#### **AASB 16 *Leases***

This standard will become effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. When applied, the standard supersedes AASB 117 *Leases*, AASB Interpretation 4 *Determining whether an arrangement contains a lease*, AASB Interpretation 115 *Operating leases - incentives* and AASB Interpretation 127 *Evaluating the substance of transactions involving the legal form of a lease*.

## 1. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont'd)

### (s) New and revised accounting standards (cont'd)

The new standard will require lessees to:

- recognise all lease assets and liabilities on the statement of financial position, initially measured at the present value of unavoidable lease payments;
- recognise amortisation of lease assets and interest on lease liabilities as expenses over the lease term; and
- separate the total of cash paid into principal and interest portions in the statement of cash flows.

The Commission has not yet quantified the impact of AASB 16 on future financial statements.

### (t) Economic dependency and going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business.

The Commission is a not-for-profit entity and is reliant on government funding in order to continue its operations. While similar funding levels have been secured for the 2016-17 financial year from the Australian Government and for the 2016-17 and 2018-19 financial years from the Queensland State Government, should government funding beyond that time be significantly reduced or curtailed, the Commission would be unlikely to be able to continue its operations at current levels.

	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>2. Grants and other contributions</b>		
Queensland State Government grants	1,600	1,600
Doomadgee funding	626	554
Other reimbursement	-	165
Australian Government grants	1,800	1,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,026</b>	<b>4,119</b>
<b>3. Other revenue</b>		
Interest	20	32
Prior year refund (FBT)	-	11
Prior year claim (long service leave)	-	22
Prior year reversal (super penalty)	-	30
Sundry	62	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>4. Employee expenses</b>		
<b>Employee benefits</b>		
Wages and salaries	2,115	2,057
Recreation leave expense	173	160
Employer superannuation contributions	259	261
Long service leave levy	48	48
<b>Employee related expenses</b>		
Workers' compensation premium	11	11
Payroll tax and fringe benefits	151	138
Other employee related expenses	45	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,802</b>	<b>2,713</b>

The number of employees including both full-time employees and part-time employees measured on a full-time equivalent basis:

	2016	2015
Number of employees:	18	17

## 4. Employee expenses (cont'd)

### Key executive management personnel

The following details for key executive management personnel include those positions that had authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Commission during 2015-16.

Position	Responsibilities	Current incumbents	
		Contract classification and appointment authority	Date initially appointed to position
Commissioner	The Commissioner is responsible for ensuring the efficient and quick discharge of the Commission's business, ensuring the Local Commissioners and the staff of the registry receive regular and appropriate training, preparing the annual report, making the Commission guidelines and carrying out the activities the Commissioner reasonably considers necessary to achieve the objects, as per the <i>Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008</i> .	Commissioner, Governor in Council under the <i>Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008</i>	25-April-2008

### Remuneration

The Commissioner's remuneration is set by the Governor in Council as provided for under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*.

There was an increase of 2% in remuneration for the Commissioner in the 2015-16 year (effective from 1 January 2016). There was no increase in remuneration for the Commissioner in the 2014-15 year.

Remuneration packages for key executive management personnel comprise the following components:

- Short term employee benefits which include:
  - Base - consisting of base salary, allowances and leave entitlements paid and provided for the entire year or for that part of the year during which the employee occupied the specified position. Amounts disclosed equal the amount expensed in the statement of comprehensive income.
  - Non-monetary benefits - consisting of provision of a vehicle together with fringe benefits tax applicable to the benefit.
- Long term employee benefits include long service leave accrued.

No remuneration was paid by the Commission to members acting in their capacity of Board Members in 2015-16.

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#### 4. Employee expenses (cont'd)

##### Key executive management personnel

##### Remuneration (cont'd)

- Post employment benefits include superannuation contributions.
- Redundancy payments are not provided for within individual contracts of employment. Contracts of employment provide only for notice periods or payment in lieu of notice on termination, regardless of the reason for termination.

Total fixed remuneration is calculated on a 'total cost' basis and includes the base and non-monetary benefits, long term employee benefits and post employment benefits.

##### 1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016

Position	Short term employee expenses		Long term employee expenses	Post employment expenses	Termination benefits	Total expenses
	Monetary expenses	Non-monetary benefits				
Commissioner	\$'000 357	\$'000 -	\$'000 8	\$'000 42	\$'000 -	\$'000 407

##### 1 July 2014 - 30 June 2015

Position	Short term employee expenses		Long term employee expenses	Post employment expenses	Termination benefits	Total expenses
	Monetary expenses	Non-monetary benefits				
Commissioner	\$'000 354	\$'000 -	\$'000 8	\$'000 41	\$'000 -	\$'000 403

##### Performance payments

No performance payments are available or made to executive management personnel of the Commission.

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	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>5. Supplies and services</b>		
Assets less than \$5,000	17	75
Communications	24	36
Internet and IT	220	204
Materials and running costs	184	185
Motor vehicle costs	67	74
Operating lease rentals	195	184
Staff travel	265	278
<b>Total</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>1,036</b>
<b>6. Amortisation</b>		
Amortisation of intangible assets	18	-
<b>7. Other expenses</b>		
External audit fees	*	29
Insurance	13	13
Other expenses (PSC report and 'The Fire Within' book)	-	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>78</b>
<p>* Total audit fees due to the Queensland Audit Office relating to the 2015-16 financial year are estimated to be \$28,930 (2014-15: \$28,050). There are no non-audit services included in this amount.</p>		
<b>8. Cash and cash equivalents</b>		
Imprest accounts	1	1
Cash at bank	1,274	1,084
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,085</b>

The following internal restrictions have been placed on the Commission's cash reserves at 30 June:

Payables	155	91
Accrued employee benefits	180	178
Capital expenditure commitments	-	185
	<b>335</b>	<b>454</b>

Interest earned on cash held with the Commonwealth Bank was between 1.05% to 1.50% in 2015-16 (between 1.75% to 2.70% in 2014-15).

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	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
<b>9. Receivables</b>		
Trade debtors	100	15
GST receivable	9	9
Interest receivable	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<u>110</u>	<u>26</u>
<b>10. Other current assets</b>		
Prepayments	34	34
Other current assets	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<u>38</u>	<u>37</u>
<b>11. Intangible assets</b>		
Customer relationship management (CRM) software upgrade, at cost	83	-
Less: amortisation	18	-
<b>Total</b>	<u>65</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>12. Payables</b>		
Trade creditors	103	67
Accruals other	52	24
<b>Total</b>	<u>155</u>	<u>91</u>
<b>13. Accrued employee benefits</b>		
Salary and wage related	9	9
Recreation leave	171	169
<b>Total</b>	<u>180</u>	<u>178</u>
<b>14. Reconciliation of operating result to net cash from operating activities</b>		
Operating surplus	274	401
Non-cash items included in operating result:		
Amortisation	18	-
	<u>292</u>	<u>401</u>
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) in trade receivables	(84)	(14)
(Increase) in other current assets	(1)	(6)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	64	(32)
Increase/(decrease) in accrued employee benefits	2	(245)
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<u>273</u>	<u>104</u>

## 15. Commitments for expenditure

### Non-cancellable operating lease

Commitments under operating leases at reporting date are inclusive of anticipated GST and are payable as follows:

	2016 \$000	2015 \$000
Not later than one year	165	143
Later than one year and not later than five years	66	1
Later than five years	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>144</b>

Operating leases are entered into as a means of acquiring access to office accommodation and office equipment for the Commission. Lease payments are generally fixed, but with inflation escalation clauses on which contingent rentals are determined.

Two of the leases have renewable options which are exercisable at market prices. No purchase options exist in relation to operating leases and no operating leases contain restrictions on financing or other leasing activities.

## 16. Contingencies

There are no matters known to the Commission as at 30 June 2016 which would give rise to the recognition of a contingent asset or liability.

## 17. Events occurring after balance date

There were no significant events occurring after balance date.



## 18. Financial instruments

### (a) Categorisation of financial instruments

The Commission has the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities:

Category	Note	2016 S'000	2015 S'000
<b>Financial assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,275	1,085
Receivables and other current assets (excl prepayments)	9 , 10	114	29
<b>Total</b>		1,389	1,114
<b>Financial liabilities</b>			
Payables	12	155	91
<b>Total</b>		155	91

### (b) Financial risk management

The Commission's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks - credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk.

Financial risk management is implemented pursuant to Government and Commission policy. These policies focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and seek to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Commission.

All financial risk is managed by Executive Management under policies approved by the Commission. The Commission provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as policies covering specific areas.

The Commission measures risk exposure using a variety of methods as follows:

Risk exposure	Measurement method
Credit risk	Ageing analysis, earnings at risk
Liquidity risk	Liquidity analysis
Market risk	Interest rate sensitivity analysis

### (c) Credit risk exposure

Credit risk exposure refers to the situation where the Commission may incur financial loss as a result of another party to a financial instrument failing to discharge their obligation.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the gross carrying amount of those assets inclusive of any allowance for impairment.

No collateral is held as security and no credit enhancements relate to financial assets held by the Commission.

The Commission manages credit risk through the use of management reports. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to credit default by ensuring that the Commission invests in secure assets and monitors all funds owed on a timely basis. Exposure to credit risk is monitored on an ongoing basis.

## 18. Financial instruments (cont'd)

### *(c) Credit risk exposure (cont'd)*

No financial assets and financial liabilities have been offset and presented net in the statement of financial position.

The method for calculating any allowance for impairment is based on past experience, current and expected changes in economic conditions and changes in client credit ratings.

No financial assets have had their terms renegotiated so as to prevent them from being past due or impaired, and are stated at the carrying amounts as indicated.

None of the Commission's receivables were past due or impaired at 30 June 2016 (2015: nil).

### *(d) Liquidity risk*

Liquidity risk refers to the situation where the Commission may encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset.

The Commission is exposed to liquidity risk in respect of its payables and accrued employee benefits.

The Commission manages liquidity risk through the use of management reports. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to liquidity risk by ensuring the Commission has sufficient funds available to meet employee and supplier obligations as they fall due. This is achieved by ensuring that sufficient levels of cash are held within the various bank accounts so as to match the expected duration of the various employee and supplier liabilities.

All of the Commission's payables are expected to be settled within 12 months from reporting date.

### *(e) Market risk*

The Commission does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to commodity price changes. The Commission is exposed to interest rate risk through its cash deposits in interest bearing accounts. The Commission does not undertake any hedging in relation to interest risk and manages its risk as per the liquidity risk management strategy.

The Commission's operating result or equity would not be materially impacted should there be a +/- 1% movement in applicable interest rates.

### *(f) Fair value*

The fair value of trade receivables and payables is assumed to approximate the value of the original transaction, less any allowance for impairment.

## 19. Budget versus actual comparison

This section discloses the Commission's budgeted figures for 2015-16 compared to actual results, with explanations of major variances in respect of the Commission's statement of comprehensive income. As the Commission is not required to comply with the requirements of AASB 1055 Budgetary reporting, this information has been included in the financial statements voluntarily and does not include all the information required by AASB 1055.

### Statement of comprehensive income

	Variance notes	Original budget 2016 \$'000	Actual 2016 \$'000	Variance 2016 \$'000	Variance % of budget
<b>Income</b>					
<i>Revenue</i>					
Grants and other contributions		4,026	4,026	0	0%
Interest	1	29	20	(9)	-31%
Other revenue	2	5	62	57	1140%
<b>Total income</b>		<b>4,060</b>	<b>4,108</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Employee expenses	3	3,071	2,802	(269)	-9%
Supplies and services	4	1,126	972	(154)	-14%
Depreciation and amortisation		21	18	(3)	-14%
Other expenses		41	42	1	2%
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>4,259</b>	<b>3,834</b>	<b>(425)</b>	<b>-10%</b>
<b>Operating result</b>	5	<b>(199)</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>238%</b>
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<b>(199)</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>238%</b>

## 19. Budget vs actual comparison (cont'd)

### Explanations of major variances

1. Actual interest earned is less than budgeted due to lower interest rates.	
2. Actual other revenue is higher than the budgeted figure due to an account credit of \$51,768 being provided to the Commission by its telecommunications service provider.	
3. Actual employee expenses are lower than the budgeted figure due to a combination of the following factors:	<b>\$'000</b>
• Administration officer expenses not incurred (position vacant for full financial year).	70
• Budgeted costs were not incurred for recruitment, training and employment of a second Deputy Commissioner (this recruitment has been delayed until the 2016-17 financial year).	142
• Fewer attendees at Local Commissioner Development Week than included in budgeted.	16
• Other reductions in budgeted costs (cancellations in scheduled conferencing in some communities and short term vacancies in certain positions).	41
	<u>269</u>
4. Actual supplies and services expenses are lower than the budgeted figure due to a combination of the following factors:	
• Reduced costs for Local Commissioner Development Week (fewer attendees and more competitive rates offered by new venue).	27
• Software support (following upgrade) included in budget but not incurred.	10
• Budgeted reprint costs of Local Commissioner publication did not occur.	9
• Intra-community visits included in budget but not fully incurred.	25
• Reduced costs in communications, internet and IT generally as a result of changed services and renegotiated contracts.	23
• Other reductions generally in budgeted costs (e.g. cancellations in scheduled conferencing in some communities resulting in less staff travel).	60
	<u>154</u>

## 19. Budget vs actual comparison (cont'd)

### Explanations of major variances (cont'd)

5. The Commission is almost entirely grant funded. Accordingly, in any year, it would normally be expected that the expenditure of the grant funding would more or less match the grant funding received with a net break-even result. Following is a high level reconciliation of the grant funding received and expended which shows that the Commission had a net under-expenditure of grant funds for 2015-16.

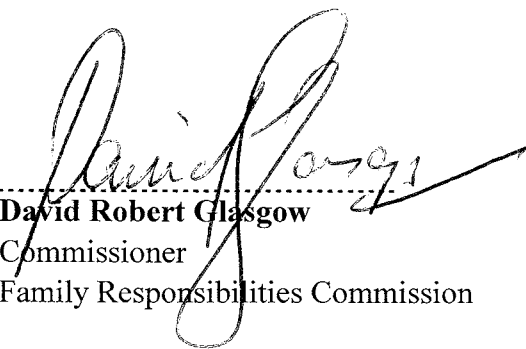
	<b>\$'000</b>
Operating result for the year	274
<b>Adjustments:</b>	
Communications - account credit received from service provider	(52)
One off retrospective payment - new remuneration guidelines	44
Customer relationship management software capitalised	(83)
Amortisation of customer relationship management software	18
Total adjustments	<u>(73)</u>
<b>Operating result as adjusted</b>	<b><u>201</u></b>

The above is consistent with the statement of cash flows which, although prepared on a strictly cash basis, shows a net increase in cash held for 2015-16 of \$190,000.


## Management certificate of the Family Responsibilities Commission

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), section 43 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with section 62 (1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

- (a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- (b) the statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of Family Responsibilities Commission for the financial year ended 30 June 2016 and of the financial position of the Commission at the end of that year; and
- (c) these assertions are based on an appropriate system of internal controls and risk management processes being effective, in all material respects, with respect to financial reporting throughout the reporting period.

  
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**David Robert Glasgow**  
Commissioner  
Family Responsibilities Commission

Date: 11-08-2016

  
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**Andrea Cotten FCA**  
Accountant  
Family Responsibilities Commission

Date: 11/8/16

QAO  
certified statements

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Commissioner of Family Responsibilities Commission

### Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Family Responsibilities Commission, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and certificates given by the Commissioner and the Accountant.

#### *The Commissioner's Responsibility for the Financial Report*

The Commissioner is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with prescribed accounting requirements identified in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, including compliance with Australian Accounting Standards. The Commissioner's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Commissioner determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### *Auditor's Responsibility*

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit is planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control, other than in expressing an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Commissioner, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report including any mandatory financial reporting requirements approved by the Treasurer for application in Queensland.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

#### *Independence*

The *Auditor-General Act 2009* promotes the independence of the Auditor-General and all authorised auditors. The Auditor-General is the auditor of all Queensland public sector entities and can be removed only by Parliament.

The Auditor-General may conduct an audit in any way considered appropriate and is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which audit powers are to be exercised. The Auditor-General has for the purposes of conducting an audit, access to all documents and property and can report to Parliament matters which in the Auditor-General's opinion are significant.

## *Opinion*

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* –

- (a) I have received all the information and explanations which I have required; and
- (b) in my opinion –
  - (i) the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
  - (ii) the financial report presents a true and fair view, in accordance with the prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of the Family Responsibilities Commission for the financial year 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and of the financial position as at the end of that year.

## **Other Matters - Electronic Presentation of the Audited Financial Report**

Those viewing an electronic presentation of these financial statements should note that audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the information presented electronically and does not provide an opinion on any information which may be hyperlinked to or from the financial statements. If users of the financial statements are concerned with the inherent risks arising from electronic presentation of information, they are advised to refer to the printed copy of the audited financial statements to confirm the accuracy of this electronically presented information.



R W HODSON CPA  
(as Delegate of the Auditor-General of Queensland)

Queensland Audit Office  
Brisbane





# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A

### Family Responsibilities Board – schedule of meetings

Date of FR Board Meeting	Venue	Attendees
28 October 2015	Remote Indigenous Land and Infrastructure Program Office Conference Room Level 9 15 Lake Street Cairns	Ms Clare O'Connor, Director-General, DATSIP (Chair); Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYP; Ms Caroline Edwards, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Affairs, DPMC.
19 May 2016	Remote Indigenous Land and Infrastructure Program Office Conference Room Level 9 15 Lake Street Cairns	Ms Clare O'Connor, Director-General, DATSIP (Chair); Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYP; Ms Caroline Edwards, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Affairs, DPMC.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX B - Sitting calendar

Family Responsibilities Commission 1 July 2015 to 31 December 2015

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

# APPENDICES



## Family Responsibilities Commission 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016

WEEK COMMENCING	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	OTHER
4 January						
11 January						
18 January						
25 January		Public Holiday				26 Australia Day
1 February		2 2	3 3	4 4		
8 February	8	9	10	11		
15 February		16 16	17 17	18 18		
22 February	22	23	24			
29 February		1 1	2 2	3 3		
7 March	7	8	9			
14 March		15 15	16 16	17 17		
21 March	21 21	22	23		Public Holiday	25 Good Friday
28 March	Public Holiday			31		28 Easter Monday
4 April						
11 April		12 12	13 13	14 14		
18 April	18	19	20	21		
25 April	Public Holiday		27	28		25 Anzac Day
2 May	Public Holiday					2 Labour Day Commissioner Development Week
9 May		10	11	12		
16 May		17 17	18 18	19 19		19 FR Board Meeting
23 May	23	24	25			
30 May		31 31	1 1	2 2		
6 June						Aurukun conferences cancelled
13 June			15	16 16		
20 June	20	21 21	22	23		
27 June						

	Aurukun		Coen		Doomadgee		Hope Vale		Mossman Gorge		Office Days
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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX C - Compliance checklist

### Family Responsibilities Commission 2015 – 2016 annual report

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 8	Page 4
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table of contents</li> <li>Glossary</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 10.1	Page 5 Page 111
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public availability</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 10.2	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpreter service statement</li> </ul>	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 10.3	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copyright notice</li> </ul>	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 10.4	Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information licensing</li> </ul>	<i>QGEA - Information Licensing</i> ARRs – section 10.5	N/A
	General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introductory Information</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 11.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency role and main functions</li> </ul>		ARRs – section 11.2	Pages 10-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating environment</li> </ul>		ARRs – section 11.3	Pages 48-55, 58-61, 105
Non-financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government's objectives for the community</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 12.1	Pages 13-15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other whole-of-government plans / specific initiatives</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 12.2	Pages 13-14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency objectives and performance indicators</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 12.3	Page 15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency service areas and service standards</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 12.4	Page 49
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary of financial performance</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 13.1	Pages 56-57
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational structure</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 14.1	Pages 62-63
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive management</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 14.2	Page 62
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 14.3	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i></li> </ul>	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 14.4	Page 69
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queensland public service values</li> </ul>	ARRs – section 14.5	Page 69

# APPENDICES



Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Governance – risk management and accountability	• Risk management	ARRs – section 15.1	Page 70
	• Audit committee	ARRs – section 15.2	N/A
	• Internal audit	ARRs – section 15.3	Page 56
	• External scrutiny	ARRs – section 15.4	Page 70
	• Information systems and record keeping	ARRs – section 15.5	Page 68
Governance – human resources	• Workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 16.1	Page 64
	• Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.11/12 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 16.2	Page 65
Open Data	• Consultancies	ARRs – section 17 ARRs - section 34.1	Page 73
	• Overseas travel	ARRs – section 17 ARRs - section 34.2	Page 73
	• Queensland Language Services Policy	ARRs – section 17 ARRs - section 34.3	N/A
Financial statements	• Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 42, 43 and 50 ARRs – section 18.1	Page 76
	• Independent Auditors Report	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 50 ARRs – section 18.2	Pages 103-104



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX D

### Welfare Reform

Welfare Reform is a partnership between five welfare reform communities, the Queensland Government, Australian Government and the Institute. Welfare Reform aims to address the collapse of social norms and passive dependence on welfare which has displaced responsibility from many Indigenous people.

#### The partnership communities are:

##### 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 1,010 people as at 30 June 2015<sup>10,11</sup>.

##### 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 277 people as at 30 June 2015<sup>10,12</sup>.

##### Doomadgee

Doomadgee lies alongside the Nicholson River, one of the permanent freshwater rivers that flow from the ranges behind Lawn Hill National Park in North West Queensland. Doomadgee is the first (or last) township on the Queensland section of the Savannah Way. It is 630 kilometres by road to Mt Isa and 1035 kilometres west of Cairns. The community had an estimated resident adult population of 875 people as at 30 June 2015<sup>10,11</sup>.

##### 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 805 people as at 30 June 2015<sup>10,11</sup>.

##### 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 98 people as at 30 June 2015<sup>10,12,13</sup>.

10. Note: Boundaries used are local government areas (ASGS 2015) for Aurukun, Doomadgee and Hope Vale, and statistical areas level 1 (SA1s) of 3139616 for Coen and 3116408 for Mossman Gorge.

11. Note: Adults 17 years and over provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office (QGSO), Queensland Treasury, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) unpublished preliminary Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data by age and sex at the Local Government Area level for 30 June 2015.

12. Note: Adults 17 years and over provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office (QGSO), Queensland Treasury, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) unpublished preliminary Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data by age and sex at the Statistical Area level 1 for 30 June 2015.

13. Note: Total population provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury, not 17 years and older, due to the small size of the total population from the ABS unpublished preliminary ERP data at the Statistical Area level 1 for 30 June 2015.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS



## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics	FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
AFL	Australian Football League	FR Board	Family Responsibilities Board
AM	Member of the Order of Australia	FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
ARRs	Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies	GYFS	Griffith Youth Forensic Service
ASP	Alternative Secondary Pathway	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	IT	Information Technology
BBNI	Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Incorporated	NIRA	National Indigenous Reform Agreement
CAA	Corporate Administration Agency	OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Club
CIM	Conditional Income Management	QGSO	Queensland Government Statistician's Office
COAG	Council of Australian Governments	QLD	Queensland
CRM	Customer Relationship Management	RAATSICC	Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care
CYAAA	Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy	RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
CYP	Cape York Partnership	SAO	Student Attendance Officer
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform	SARAS	Study and Research Assistance Scheme
DATSIP	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships	SCM	Student Case Manager
DCCSDS	Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	TAFE	Technical and Further Training
DET	Department of Education and Training	TIS	Translating and Interpreting Service
DHPW	Department of Housing and Public Works	TSS	Transition Support Services
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney-General	VIM	Voluntary Income Management
DPMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	WBC	Wellbeing Centre
DV	Domestic Violence	WCC	Western Cape College
DVB	Domestic Violence Breach	YJ Act	<i>Youth Justice Act 1992</i>
DVO	Domestic Violence Order	Also:	
EMT	Executive Management Team		Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute)
ERP	Estimated Resident Population		Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)
FAA	<i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i>		<i>Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (the FRC Act)</i>
FaCC	Family and Child Connect		Family Responsibilities Commission Registry (the Registry)
FPMS	<i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009</i>		Mr David Glasgow, Family Responsibilities Commissioner (the Commissioner)



# CONTACT DETAILS

## Family Responsibilities Commission

### Cairns Central Registry

PO Box 5438, Cairns Qld 4870  
Level 3, 107 Lake Street, Cairns  
Ph (07) 4057 3870  
Fax (07) 4041 0974  
[www.frcq.org.au](http://www.frcq.org.au)

### Aurukun

CJG Building, Wuungkah Street, Aurukun 4892  
Ph (07) 4060 6185  
Fax (07) 4060 6094

### Coen

Coen Hub, 7 Taylor Street, Coen 4892  
Ph 0417 798 392  
Fax (07) 4041 0974

### Doomadgee

15 Sharpe Street, Doomadgee 4830  
Ph (07) 4745 8111  
Fax (07) 4745 8366

### Hope Vale

Office 1, Hope Vale Business Service Centre, 3 Muni Street, Hope Vale 4895  
Ph (07) 4060 9153  
Fax (07) 4060 9137

### Mossman Gorge

Lunde Street, Mossman Gorge 4873  
Ph 0417 798 392  
Fax (07) 4041 0974

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







