

INCOME MANAGEMENT IN DOOMADGEE



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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