



REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

From the desk of the Registrar

Operations

What started out as a trial on 1 July 2008 with a legislated end date of 31 December 2011, has now completed 11 years of operations. The Commission has grown from a raw and inexperienced statutory authority with a groundbreaking mandate in Welfare Reform, into an organisation which has significantly grown Indigenous authority and self-determination. It is a testament to the successes achieved in the first three and a-half years of the Commission, and the ongoing successes achieved thereafter, that we are still here today.

During the 2008-09 fiscal year the Commission received 1,890 within jurisdiction notices. In our 11th year we report having received 5,670 within jurisdiction notices. The majority of notices received were for School Attendance, followed by Magistrate Court, Domestic Violence Offences and then Child Safety and Welfare notices. Information regarding our performance during the year is located in Our performance – review of operations on page 52.

Dr Chris Sarra, Director-General, DATSIP visited Aurukun, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge to discuss Local Thriving Communities during the reporting period, but did not visit Coen due to sorry business and other commitments. Local Thriving Communities delivers the Government's response to the QPC report on its inquiry into service delivery in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. On 27 November the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Honourable Jackie Trad MP, formally announced that the Commission, along with the welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, would be transitioning to the Queensland Government's Local Thriving Communities approach. What the transition will mean for the operations of the Commission is yet to be determined. The Commission is informed the Government will be implementing Local Thriving Communities across all 19 remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in co-design with communities.

Aside from the uncertain future which the Local Commissioners and staff continue to face, we are also looking to a change of leadership in the 2019-20 financial year with the upcoming retirement of Commissioner David Glasgow. We look forward to greeting the new FRC Commissioner who will lead us into the next chapter. Our responsibility is to assist in evolving the Commission based on the lessons we've learnt and to ensure the Local Commissioners are enabled to continue their empowering work in community.

Local Commissioners

The mood and activity in the last half of this year was very much influenced by the appointment and non-appointment of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner respectively. The appointment on a part-time basis of Commissioner David Glasgow affected his ability to visit and support all five FRC communities, particularly in light of his relocation to Townsville in 2018 and no further support available from a deputy. Local Commissioners are conducting conferences in their own right, however, they have reported missing the support and mentoring provided by both Commissioner Glasgow and former Deputy Commissioner Curtin. The uncertainty surrounding the future of the Commission and Welfare Reform has affected morale. The Local Commissioners' year in review reports provide the views of the Local Commissioners in more detail and I will let those reports speak for themselves.

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The Local Commissioners from each community remain hopeful that they can continue to work in partnership as community leaders with the State Government to create solutions and drive future reform agendas. They have expressed their view that the multi-dimensional disadvantage affecting their communities, and many other communities in Australia, requires a multi-faceted approach. The Local Commissioners believe that, amongst other strategies, addressing this disadvantage requires the powers they currently possess to empower and enable individuals to move forward. *"We do not say we do not need reform. We need to build upon the FRC model, not destroy it"*.

We are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of our Local Commissioners. This year two Local Commissioners were recognised and rewarded for their achievements. Aurukun Commissioner Ada Woolla was appointed to the Queensland First Children and Families Board. Her experience with the Commission in dealing with school attendance, domestic violence and child safety matters will stand her in good stead. Coen Commissioner Maureen Liddy received the Cook Shire Council Citizen of the Year award at the annual Australia Day celebrations conducted at the Cooktown Botanical Gardens.

Significant events

On 26 July by way of Executive Council Minute No. 312 the Governor in Council, under the FRC Act, approved Commissioner Glasgow's reappointment as Commissioner of the FRC from 1 August 2018 until 31 December 2018. Further, on 13 December 2018 the Governor in Council approved the reappointment of the FRC Commissioner on a part-time basis for the period 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019. In order to allow for sufficient time to select and introduce a new FRC Commissioner upon Commissioner Glasgow's expected retirement, an additional reappointment period of two months was approved on 28 June 2019.

No reappointment was made by the Queensland Government for the Deputy Commissioner's role which ceased on 31 December 2018.

The following Local Commissioners were re-appointed for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 October 2019:

- Edgar Kerindun, Vera Koomeeta, Doris Poonkamelya, Dorothy Pootchemunka, Ada Woolla and Keri Tamwoy as Aurukun Commissioners
- Elaine Liddy, Maureen Liddy, Alison Liddy, May Kepple and Garry Port as Coen Commissioners
- Elaine Cairns, Guy Douglas, Karen Jupiter, Christopher Logan, Eleanor Logan and Kaylene O'Keefe as Doomadgee Commissioners
- Erica Deeral, Victor Gibson, Doreen Hart, Cheryl Cannon and Selina Bowen as Hope Vale Commissioners and
- Karen Gibson, Karen Shuan and Loretta Spratt as Mossman Gorge Commissioners.

The Queensland budget was tabled in State Parliament on Tuesday, 11 June 2019. In that budget the Queensland Government announced its commitment to continue funding for the Commission for the 2019-20 financial year.



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The Commission's annual School Awards ceremonies were conducted in December in each of the five communities. Prizes were awarded for attendance achievements and included certificates, medals and other incentives. Each year the Local Commissioners present the awards to provide positive recognition and support for those students (and their families) who regularly attend school, to provide an incentive for those students who wish to improve their school attendance and to reiterate the importance of education in achieving a dream, and better life for the future.

The extension of CYIM (in June 2017) to 30 June 2019 included an agreement between the then Australian Government Minister for Human Services the Honourable Alan Tudge MP and the opposition to undertake a review of CYIM. The Strategic Review of Cape York Income Management Final Report dated November 2018 was released in December 2018. The review provided an analysis of the data (qualitative and quantitative), assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the model, and informed how it could be used in the future, subject to a review of CYWR. During the drafting of the report Commission staff and Local Commissioners liaised with both DSS and QUT to inform this review. The Executive Summary of the review determined that the manner in which CYIM is delivered through the FRC Commissioners was the *"key driving factor for any successes that can be attributed to it"*, and that the model was not only delivered in a more culturally appropriate manner for Indigenous Australians, but could be tailored to an individual's personal circumstances, unlike other income management models; *"This delivery mechanism could provide useful lessons for future Cape York models, as well as other Australian models"*. The qualitative data was indicative of a *"largely positive view"*, and although community level data showed mixed results, the leadership shown by the FRC Commissioners in delivering CYIM decisions, and their ability to be flexible in their approach *"promotes the restoration and rebuilding of Indigenous authority"*, the primary objective of the FRC Act. Importantly, while some data indicated mixed results, the analysis of FRC clients in particular showed that whilst the use of CYIM did not necessarily eliminate further breaches, it did extend the time between breach notifications.

CYIM is only one of the tools available to the Commissioners in restoring social responsibility in their communities. CYIM is used in a targeted approach, mostly as a last resort, and thus only a small percentage of clients are subject to a CYIM order. Of primary importance to the Commissioners is their ability to link FRC clients with support services and CYIM does play a vital role in incentivising FRC clients to make the necessary changes in their lives for the benefit of their families and the community, whilst also ensuring that the basic needs of children are met.

Staffing

I would like to extend my appreciation to the staff and thank them for sharing their professionalism with me throughout the year. Individually they have crafted their contributions to the Commission in such a way as to add enormous value. Each one of them foster a sense of ownership and responsibility to the Commission which has assisted the Commission to perform at its best. To those Local Coordinators who live remotely in the performance of their functions, by necessity you become part of your communities, and to perform your functions well, you must be accepted by your communities. Each has made a contribution to both their communities and the Commission.

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Commissioner David Glasgow's significant contribution as the Commission's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is well known. He has led us since 2008 with very few dull moments and is now celebrating the end of an exceptional career that has achieved many goals. He has given the Commission and all of us working within it direction, guidance and inspiration. None of us expected to be here 11 years down the track, so how lucky we are to have worked with the best. I speak for all of us when I say working with him has been a privilege.

Former Deputy Commissioner Curtin's appointment ended with the Commission on 31 December 2018. He is missed by Commission staff and all the Local Commissioners who voiced their appreciation of his efforts since 2010 at the Local Commissioner Development Week held in June 2019. His support for my role of Registrar has been very much valued and appreciated, as was his specific leadership role with the Doomadgee Commissioners. The Deputy Commissioner's mentoring of each of them has assisted them to become what they are today – leaders of their community.

Maxine McLeod **Registrar**



Commissioner Glasgow with the registry staff