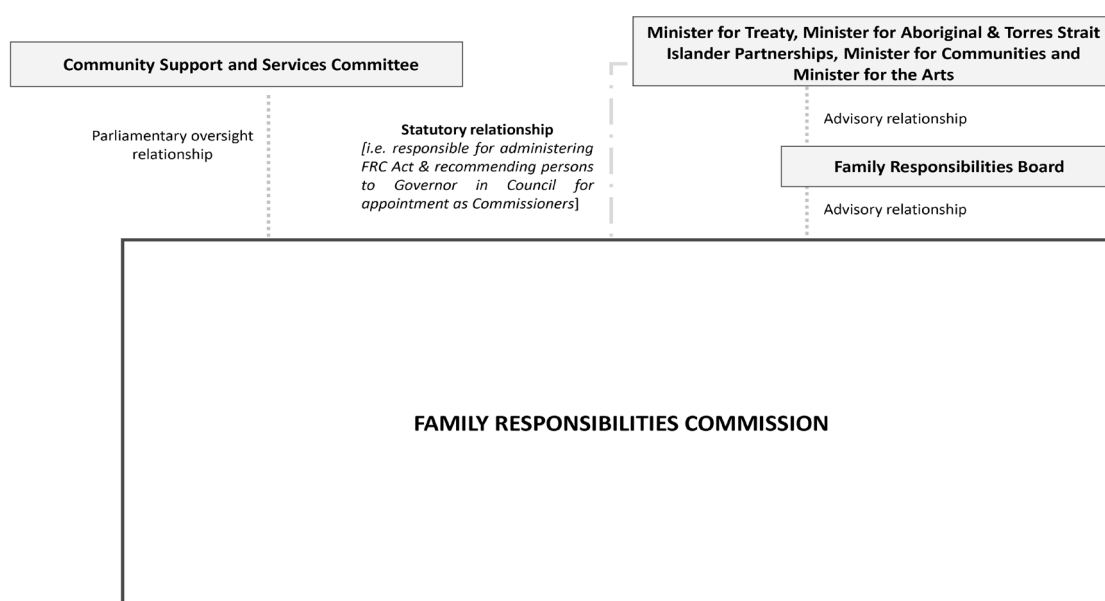




Governance

External governance

The FRC, as an independent statutory authority, falls under the umbrella of DTATSIPCA. The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are appointed by the Governor in Council under recommendation by the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts. The Minister and FR Board have advisory relationships to the Commissioner.



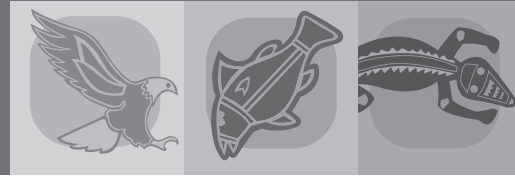
Ministerial portfolio

For the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 the Minister responsible for administering the FRC Act was the Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts.

Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the FRC Act provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (FR Board). Under section 117 of the FRC Act, the FR Board has a mandate to: give advice and make recommendations to the State Minister about the operation of the Commission; if asked by the Commissioner, give advice and make recommendations to the Commission about the performance of its functions; and consider the reports submitted by the Commission.

Governance



The FR Board consists of one person nominated by the State Minister (chairperson of the FR Board), one person nominated by the Australian Government and one person nominated by the Cape York Institute. FR Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council for the term stated in the member's instrument of appointment.

The FR Board members as at 30 June 2024 were:

Ms Clare O'Connor	Director-General, DTATSIPCA as the Chair
Ms Jody Broun	CEO, NIAA
Mr Noel Pearson	Founder, Cape York Partnership representing CYI.

The FRC Act requires the FR Board to meet every six months. The meeting may be held by using any technology available which will allow for efficient and effective communication. The FR Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the FR Board is comprised of two members. Meetings during the reporting period are reflected below.

Date of FR Board meeting	Venue	Board Attendees
5 September 2023	Level 9, Cairns Corporate Tower, 15 Lake Street, Cairns	Ms Clare O'Connor (Chair), Director-General DTATSIPCA; Ms Jody Broun CEO, NIAA; Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYI.
20 February 2024	Room 1402, 1 William Street, Brisbane	Ms Clare O'Connor (Chair), Director-General DTATSIPCA; Ms Jody Broun, CEO, NIAA; Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYI.

Executive Management Team

The Commission's EMT is comprised of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Registrar, and the Executive Officer (Corporate). 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 employees and service providers
- providing a clear future direction for the Commission
- 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
 - the operation, performance and reporting of the Commission regarding its obligations under the FRC Act and other relevant legislation.



Governance

Due to the small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commission’s operational performance. In addition, the EMT oversees the operations of finance, information management, human resources and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2023-24 year.

Queensland public service values

<p>Customers first</p>	<p>Be courageous</p>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your customers • Deliver what matters • Make decisions with empathy 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own your actions, successes and mistakes • Take calculated risks • Act with transparency
<p>Ideas into action</p>	<p>Empower people</p>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge the norm and suggest solutions • Encourage and embrace new ideas • Work across boundaries 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead, empower and trust • Play to everyone’s strengths • Develop yourself and those around you
<p>Unleash potential</p>	
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect greatness • Lead and set clear expectations • Seek, provide and act on feedback 	

The Commission has structured its operations in accordance with the objects and principles of the FRC Act and the Queensland public service values: 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 work with the Australian and Queensland Governments, stakeholders and clients to deliver outcomes for the welfare reform communities. In doing so the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. Our Local Commissioners and registry staff know their customers and value the cultural needs and family connectedness of community members. Decisions are made with an understanding of where each client comes from and what has influenced their behaviour. The exercise of authority under the FRC Act is governed by this empathy. The Commissioners are challenging the negative social 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 registry staff, and from Commission clients.



Public sector ethics and Code of Conduct

Apart from the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and the Local Commissioners – who are appointed by Governor in Council – staff of the Commission are employed under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. 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. Online Fraud and Corruption, Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct training is included in induction processes for new employees and is completed by all employees on an annual basis. To further assist Commission employees with ethical decision-making and in understanding the Code of Conduct, the Commission has a supplementary policy document titled Workplace Policy. This policy presents a broad framework for ethical behaviour, supports the Code of Conduct and is consistent with the requirements of the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the FRC Act and relevant Public Service Commission (PSC) policies and directives. The Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy are both available in hard copy at all Commission premises.

The Local Registry Coordinators for the five FRC communities conduct Code of Conduct training for the Local Commissioners on an annual basis. Aside from the fundamental principles of the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct which are strictly adhered to, the principles of natural justice, conflict of interest and confidentiality are established and strongly reinforced with Local Commissioners through the Local Commissioners' Handbook. Confidentiality is specifically legislated by section 147 'Preservation of confidentiality' in the FRC Act which stipulates that a Commission member, FR Board member, member of staff or a person engaged by a support service must not record, disclose or use confidential information gained through involvement in the administration of the FRC Act unless for lawful purposes as defined in the section.

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 registry and in the five welfare reform communities. The Strategic Plan 2023-2027 was published on the FRC website from 1 July 2023.

Human Rights

The *Human Rights Act 2019* came into effect on 1 January 2020. The Act is a framework for the Queensland public sector and places the human rights of individuals at the forefront of government and public sector service delivery. It is therefore clear that as employees in a public entity, and as employers, we must consider the impact of our decisions and actions on the human rights of those we serve.

The Commission is committed to building a culture that respects and promotes human rights. To build upon this commitment, all employees complete mandatory annual online training through DTATSIPCA's learning management system in regard to the legislative requirements of the *Human Rights Act 2019*.



Governance

The Commission's complaints management policies incorporate the need to identify and deal appropriately with a human rights complaint in a transparent process. The Commission has adopted the 'receive/assess/consider/resolve/respond/learn/report' methodology to handle human rights complaints. The policy states the Commission will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and will properly consider human rights when making decisions regarding complaints. The Commission received no human rights complaints during the reporting period.

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 which focuses on:

- strategic risks – risks which present as challenges to the Commission's strategic direction and vision
- 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 a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The framework of this plan incorporates five key elements: prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and review. 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 BCP commences with an integrated approach to managing all risks that may impact strategic and business objectives and moves to reviewing and re-evaluating identified risks and reporting to the EMT.

Internal audit

The Commission is a small organisation, and as such a separate audit committee has not been established. Additionally, a specific internal audit function is not required unless directed by the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts. Responsibility for audit functions is included as part of the role of the EMT in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission.

The Executive Officer (Corporate) is responsible for performing internal audits to ensure efficiency and economy of systems and to identify financial, operational and business continuity risks. Audit results are reported to the Commissioner and Registrar to determine whether remedial actions are required and to establish compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.

Throughout the reporting period, the Commission's CRM system was periodically audited for quality assurance purposes. These audits were undertaken to assist in maintaining the integrity of our underlying data used for operational and statistical reporting purposes, as well as to ensure continuous improvement in delivering flexible, effective and efficient services.



The results of internal audits undertaken during the reporting period did not identify any significant deficiencies in internal control processes nor any operational or financial risks of a systemic nature that required external remedial action.

External scrutiny

The Queensland Parliament's Community Support and Services Committee has oversight responsibility for the FRC, as established by Schedule 6 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Queensland Legislative Assembly (Standing Orders).

Under the Standing Orders (SO194A), the committee's functions with respect to the FRC are to:

- monitor and review the FRC's performance of its functions
- report to the Assembly on any matter concerning the FRC, its functions or the performance of its functions that the committee considers should be drawn to the Assembly's attention
- examine each annual report tabled in the Assembly under the FRC Act and, if appropriate, comment on any aspect of the report
- report to the Assembly any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the FRC that the committee considers desirable for the more effective operation of the FRC or of the FRC Act.

The committee does not have the power to reconsider a decision or finding of the FRC. The committee does not act as an appeal body in respect of decisions made by the FRC.

On 18 April 2024, by invitation, Commissioner Williams, Executive Officer (Corporate) Wayne Massey and Manager (Compliance and Legal Policy) Camille Banks appeared in person at a Public Briefing of the Community Support and Services Committee of the Queensland State Parliament. The purpose of the briefing was to assist the Committee with its oversight of the functions and performance of the Commission. At the briefing Commissioner Williams provided an update on:

- the MoU for funding for three consecutive years resulting in continuity for Local Commissioner recruitment and employment
- Local Commissioner aging and gender balance issues; eligibility issues under the FRC Act and the difficulty of obtaining a blue card
- the importance of operationalising the Childrens Court trigger in the FRC Act
- the success of the ESR and resultant increase in school attendance data
- the success of Client Engagement through VCPs and VIM
- capacity issues for service providers with the increased demand for their services.



Governance

Information systems and records governance

The Commission's ICT system plays a vital role in supporting employees in the Cairns registry and regional offices. The Commission has policies and protocols in place to ensure all employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding ethical information access, transference, usage, and management. These systems capture and retain information, ensure reliable availability, preserve the integrity of information, and provide a high level of security and confidentiality. Commission employees are required to complete annual online information security training in order to protect the integrity of our systems.

The Commission has policies and protocols in place for the provision of information and communication technology services. These policies ensure that the Commission complies with the *Information Privacy Act 2009* whilst providing a high level of security and support. All information security implementation complies with the Australian Cyber Security Centre's 'essential eight cyber security strategies' and the Queensland Government *Information Security Policy (IS18:2018)*, where the focus is primarily on the prevention of unauthorised access, non-compliance, leakage, data disclosure, and damage caused through malware or virus infiltrations.

Workforce profile

At 30 June 2024 the Commission had an employee establishment of 20.2 full time equivalent positions (FTE) occupied by a headcount of 20 staff members equating to 18 FTE.

Additionally, the Commission employs 36 Indigenous Local Commissioners on a fee for service basis under the *Remuneration Procedures for Part-Time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies*. The Commission employs a Deputy Commissioner (included in the figures above) who is engaged subject to a delegation from the Commissioner to perform her functions under section 24 of the FRC Act as needed. The Deputy Commissioner is paid at an hourly rate commensurate with that of a Magistrate under the *Judicial Remuneration Act 2007* and may act as the Commissioner (if appointed under section 25 of the FRC Act) if the Commissioner is not available to perform the Commissioner's functions, or there is a vacancy in the office of the Commissioner. The figures in the workforce profile table below are based on the workforce profile of the Commission, including the Commissioner as CEO, and the Deputy Commissioner, but excluding the Local Commissioners.

Gender

Gender	Number (Headcount)	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on headcount)
Woman	15	75.00
Man	5	25.00
Non-binary	0	0



Diversity target group data

Diversity groups	Number (Headcount)	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on headcount)
Women	15	75.00
Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<5	<25.00
People with disability	<5	<25.00
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – Speak a language at home other than English ¹	5	25.00

Target group data for Women in Leadership Roles

	Number (Headcount)	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on headcount)
Senior Officers (Classified and s122 equivalent combined)	<5	<25.00
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives (Classified and s122 equivalent combined)	<5	<25.00

The Commission conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Sector Act 2022* and relevant PSC policies and directives. New employees are welcomed through the Commission's online induction process which provides information regarding the Commission and links to all human resource policies. Each new employee is mentored by a staff member to assist them to become familiar with the Commission and what is expected of them in their role.

The Commission is committed to both maximising permanent employment as reflected in the *State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2023* and relevant PSC directives, and maximising employment security as reflected in the whole of government Employment Security Policy.

During the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.

1. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages or Australian South Sea Islander languages spoken at home.



Governance

Performance management

To facilitate employee development, each manager is instructed to enter into a PDA with the employees in their team. The PDA is linked to the Commission's strategic objectives and forms part of a broad system of human resource management processes including induction and compulsory online training. 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.

Flexible working arrangements and wellbeing

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 or job share work opportunities exist, and hours of work arrangements including the opportunity for purchased leave are available. These flexible arrangements are also offered to assist in balancing work and carer roles where required. Employees are encouraged to use their annual leave.

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.

Professional development

Local Commissioner Development Week

A Local Commissioner Development Week was conducted during the week commencing 4 September 2023. Local Commissioners from each community travelled to Cairns to participate in the following activities:

- update on the new Strategic Plan 2023-2027 from Camille Banks
- site visit to Djarragun College, and the Ngak Min Health Service
- occupational violence and aggression de-escalation training facilitated by an external specialist training provider
- domestic and family violence training workshop presented by Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin and Simon Bright from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service
- understanding trauma informed approaches workshop by Professor Judy Atkinson
- strategic direction round table facilitated by Commissioner Tammy Williams and Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin.

Governance



The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on an ongoing basis to ensure it actively works to restore local authority by:

- assisting the Local Commissioners to enhance and expand upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, service providers, government departments and agencies
- assisting the Local Commissioners with the delivery of training modules on statutory interpretation and applying a decision-making framework consistent with the FRC Act
- conducting an annual training week during which the Local Commissioners will receive professional training
- conducting round table discussions to set strategic priorities, analyse unique challenges and develop a vision for the future
- conducting a review of operations via individual community dashboards through which statistics are presented and analysed, key performance indicators are set and assessed, and goals refreshed.

The broader focus of the Commission's professional development program for employees is on:

- promoting 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
- ongoing in-house training delivered by the Commissioner on statutory interpretation and application of the FRC Act to registry practices and procedures
- building a resilient workforce by providing online courses in Ethical Decision-Making, leadership and people management skills, Recognise, Respond, Refer – Domestic and Family Violence, Fraud and Corruption Control, Information Privacy, Conflict of Interest, Human Rights Act Public Entities Decision Making (online), Phishing – Information Security Awareness and Finance and Procurement Fundamentals
- promoting cultural capacity by providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training upon induction
- facilitating visits to welfare reform communities for new employees to increase their awareness of each unique community and enhance their understanding of the conferencing environment
- providing flexible work practices to enable employees to study whilst continuing to meet operational and client needs
- providing financial assistance and leave arrangements under the Commission's Study and Research Assistance Scheme.



Governance

In line with the above strategies and practices, employees are offered backfill roles in higher duty positions where appropriate in order to ensure continuity of work processes, mitigate downtime, minimise disruption to workflows and enhance employee retention. Backfilling and cross-training safeguards employee expertise and corporate knowledge, whilst maximising succession planning.

During 2023-24 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$22,917 excluding travel costs. This investment provides a platform for the Commission to foster the development of new skills, monitor, evaluate and improve business processes and improve service delivery.

Publication of information online

For information regarding right to information and information privacy refer to the Right to Information section on the Commission website. For Indigenous matters and complaints management, refer to the Additional Published Information under Right to Information on the Commission's website at <https://www.frcq.org.au>. In 2023-24 the Commission did not incur any overseas travel expenditure. For consultancies, refer to the Queensland Government Open Data website at <https://data.qld.gov.au>.

Publications by the Commission during 2023-24

1. Annual Report 2022-2023
2. Quarterly Reports 59 - 61 (January 2023 to September 2023)

All publications are available on the FRC's website: <https://www.frcq.org.au>.