



Annual Report 2014-15

Report No. 8, 55th Parliament

**Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family
Violence Prevention Committee**

November 2015

Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

Chair	Ms Leanne Donaldson MP, Member for Bundaberg
Deputy Chair	Mr Mark McArdle MP, Member for Caloundra
Members	Miss Nikki Boyd MP, Member for Pine Rivers Ms Ann Leahy MP, Member for Warrego Mr Matt McEachan MP, Member for Redlands Mr Rob Pyne MP, Member for Cairns
Committee Staff	Mr Karl Holden, Research Director (from 17 August 2015) Mr Peter Rodgers, Acting Research Director (27 March to 14 August 2015) Ms Lucy Manderson, Principal Research Officer Ms Carla Campillo, Executive Assistant (from 25 May 2015) Ms Stephanie Cash, Executive Assistant (27 March to 22 May 2015)
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1 Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

The Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee (Committee) was established on 27 March 2015 as a portfolio committee of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.¹

Section 92 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* (POQA) outlines the main responsibilities of a portfolio committee. In relation to its portfolio area, a committee may:

- consider Appropriation Bills
- consider other legislation and proposed legislation, and
- perform its role in relation to public accounts and public works.

Schedule 6 of the *Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly* sets out the Committee's portfolio responsibilities as follows:

- Communities, Women, Youth, Child Safety and Multicultural Affairs
- Domestic and Family Violence Prevention, and
- Disability Services and Seniors.²

Section 92 of the POQA provides that a portfolio committee is to also deal with an issue referred to it by the Legislative Assembly or under another Act, whether or not the issue is within its portfolio area.

2 Annual report

In accordance with section 108 of the POQA, the Committee is required to table an annual report within 4 months and 14 days after the end of each financial year. The report must include:

- a list of meetings of the Committee and the names of members attending or absent from each meeting
- a summary of issues considered by the Committee, including a description of the more significant issues arising from the considerations
- a statement of the Committee's revenue and spending for the year, and
- a brief description of responses by Ministers to recommendations of the Committee.

This report provides a summary of the activities of the Committee from 27 March 2015 to 30 June 2015 (the reporting period).

3 Inquiries and Reports

During the 2014-15 financial year, the Committee:

- tabled a subordinate legislation report
- commenced its inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors, and
- commenced its consideration of the Auditor-General's *Report No. 17: 2014-15 – Managing child safety information*.

1 *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, section 88 and Standing Order 194, Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly

2 Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly, Schedule 6

Copies of Committee publications are available from the Committee's webpage: www.parliament.qld.gov.au/CDSDFVPC.

3.1 Subordinate legislation

The Committee examines subordinate legislation in accordance with its responsibility under section 93(1) of the POQA, to consider:

- the policy to be given effect by the legislation
- the application of fundamental legislative principles to the legislation, and
- its lawfulness.

3.1.1 Subordinate legislation tabled between 26 March 2015 and 18 May 2015 (Report No. 1)

On 21 May 2015, the Committee tabled *Report No. 1: Subordinate legislation tabled between 26 March 2015 and 18 May 2015*. The report advised of the Committee's findings with respect to the Proclamation made under the *Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2014*, tabled on 26 May 2015.

The Committee did not identify any significant policy issues or issues relating to fundamental legislative principles in the subordinate legislation examined.

3.2 Inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors

Section 92(2) of the POQA provides that in addition to its core responsibilities and role, a portfolio committee is also to deal with an issue referred to it by the Assembly or under another Act.

On 27 March 2015, the Legislative Assembly referred an inquiry to the Committee in relation to the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors.

The terms of reference required that the Committee consider:

- the current levels of financial literacy of seniors and how that can be improved, for example by education programs
- what support and advice is available to assist seniors with their independent financial decision-making
- online and internet based vulnerabilities and the prevalence and vulnerability of seniors to scams, and
- agencies and organisations that provide advice and support to seniors in relation to financial decision-making.

In undertaking the inquiry, the Committee was to seek public submissions and consult with key stakeholders, including seniors' representative bodies, the financial sector and relevant experts.

The Committee was required to report to the Legislative Assembly by 31 August 2015.

In progressing its inquiry during the 2014-15 financial year, the Committee:

- issued a call for public submissions with a deadline of 31 May 2015, and received 20 written submissions
- received public briefings from:
 - the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (Department) on 6 May 2015, and
 - the Queensland Police Service and the UnitingCare Community Eder Abuse Prevention Unit on 20 May 2015,

- held a public hearing on 3 June 2015, including representatives from the Queensland Police Service Fraud and Cyber Crime Group, State Crime; Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy Inc.; Caxton Legal Centre Inc.; the Office of the Public Guardian; the Council on the Ageing; and the Public Trustee, and
- sought written advice from the Department and other government agencies and stakeholders including responses to questions taken on notice and issues raised during public briefings and hearings and in submissions.

3.3 Auditor-General’s Report No. 17: 2014-15 – Managing child safety information

On 19 May 2015, the Auditor-General tabled *Report No. 17: 2014-15 – Managing child safety information*. On 2 June 2015, the Committee of the Legislative Assembly referred the report to the Committee for consideration.

The report examined the management of the information of children and young people under the care of the Department through audits of the Department and three non-government organisations who provide services in the area.

The Committee’s consideration of the report was in its initial stages at the close of the financial year.

4 Committee expenditure

The Committee had no revenue during 2014-15. The Committee is funded from the appropriation made to the Legislative Assembly. The expenditure of the Committee from 27 March 2015 to 30 June 2015 is shown in the table below.

Item	\$
Staff salaries and related expenses	\$77,969.00 ³
Business travel	\$51.87
Contractors	\$125.00
Advertising	\$7,093.25
Communications	\$318.84
Hospitality, stationery, consumables and miscellaneous expenses	\$176.00
Expenditure Total	\$85,733.96

3 Figures for staffing expenditure shown above reflect a three person secretariat supporting the committee. The committee’s staffing might have been supplemented with additional resources from general Committee Office staff during the reporting period.

5 Meeting attendance record

The table below shows the attendance of Committee members at Committee meetings and other activities during the reporting period.

Meeting Date	Ms Leanne Donaldson MP (Chair)	Mr Mark McArdle MP (Deputy Chair)	Miss Nikki Boyd MP	Ms Ann Leahy MP	Mr Matt McEachan MP	Mr Rob Pyne MP
15/04/2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
06/05/2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20/05/2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
03/06/2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10/06/2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X



Ms Leanne Donaldson MP
Chair
 November 2015