

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report No. 46 on the

Public Guardian Bill 2014

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

INTRODUCTION

On 20 March 2014 the Public Guardian Bill 2014 (the Bill) was introduced into the Queensland Parliament.

Parliament referred the Bill to the Health and Community Services Committee (the Committee) for consideration and requested the Committee table its report on its consideration of the Bill by 13 May 2014.

On 13 May 2014, the Committee tabled Report No. 46 in the Queensland Parliament (the report).

The Queensland Government response to the Committee's recommendations and other matters raised by the report is provided below.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Public Guardian Bill 2014 be passed.

Queensland Government response

The Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Bill and notes the Committee's support of the Bill.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Minister:

- *provide the Legislative Assembly, during the second reading debate, with an outline of the expected timing of the main components of reforms to implement the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry recommendations*
- *ensure that detailed information about expected sequence and timing of child protection reforms is provided to child protection stakeholders to assist them in responding to proposals for change.*

Queensland Government response

The Government accepts this recommendation.

This Government has committed to implementing the Commission's recommendations and supports a three-phased approach to implementation that reflects the three tracks of the Commission's Roadmap:

- reduce the number of children and young people in the child protection system;
- revitalise child protection frontline services and family support, breaking the intergenerational cycle of abuse and neglect; and
- refocus oversight on learning, improving and taking responsibility.

Implementation has commenced with planning, preparation and legislative reform in the first year.

The amendments in the Public Guardian Bill 2014, Child Protection Reform Amendment Bill 2014 and Family and Child Commission Bill 2014 were identified as matters that needed to be progressed as a priority to implement the Commission recommendations. The Office of the Public Guardian and Family and Child Commission will commence from 1 July 2014. Other non-legislative reforms required to implement Commission recommendations have also been prioritised.

The next phases of implementation will involve a gradual roll out of the key reforms focussed on those which reduce demand on the system and establish a community based referral system, followed by revitalisation of frontline services and improvements in oversight.

A program management plan to direct the long-term implementation of other aspects of the program is currently being prepared. The Government is committed to forging a strong partnership with stakeholders. A stakeholder advisory committee has been established to facilitate the co-design of project responses as recommended by the Commission of Inquiry Report and a stakeholder engagement strategy is being prepared as part of the project management plan.