ANNUAL REPORT 10

Annual Report 2009-10

Family Responsibilities Commission

FRC

FAMILY
RESPONSIBILITIES
COMMISSION

The Annual Report of the Family Responsibilities Commission summarises the Commission and its financial and corporate performance for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

Limited copies of this Annual Report will be available in hard copy. To obtain a copy please contact:

Family Responsibilities Commission
PO Box 5438
Cairns QLD 4870
Ph: (07) 4057 3870
Fax: (07) 4041 0974

Alternatively you can visit the following website:
www.frcq.org.au

The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding the Annual Report, or need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to telephone the Family Responsibilities Commission on (07) 4057 3870.

Front cover: Shamuliah Ware, daughter of Commissioner Harold Bowen preparing for a traditional opening ceremony in Hope Vale

© **State of Queensland (Family Responsibilities Commission) 2010**

ISSN – 1837-4565

The artist Karen Gibson with her work 'Mougard Dance'

The Commission recognises we are visitors to the country we travel across and work in and that many of our Local Commissioners are Traditional Owners and Elders of their communities. The Commission acknowledges and pays our respects to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Teachers of these lands; to those of the past whose unseen hands guide the actions and decisions of the Commissioners today; to those of the present working for their communities and setting the example for the next generation and to those of the future, the Elders not yet born who will inherit the legacy of our efforts.

Children of the Hope Vale community express their pride in their heritage and community. It is for Ethan Bowen, Jeremiah Bowen, Nathanial West, Brangston Deeral, Kayle Bowen, Shaidon Woibo, Broyden Rosedale, Kyle McLean, Jason McLean, Asai Gibson, Royceton Darkan, Jada Hart, Timothy Yoren, Mark Rosendale, Jarvis Darkan, MaKeeya Woibo, Yazzmin Murphy and Shamuliah Ware and the many others like them that we all strive with like mind and determination.

Family Responsibilities Commission
Cairns Commonwealth Centre
Level 3, 107 Lake Street,
PO Box 5438
Cairns Qld 4870

Ph: 07 4057 3870
Fax: 07 4041 0974
www.frcq.org.au

17 August 2010

The Honourable D C Boyle MP
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Level 18, Mineral House
41 George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2009-2010 for the Family Responsibilities Commission.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial Performance Management Standard 2009*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual Report Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be accessed at www.frcq.org.au after 30 September 2010.

Yours sincerely

David Glasgow
Commissioner
Family Responsibilities Commission

Contents

1. Preamble - Noel Pearson 6
2. Strategic Overview 7
3. Commissioner Glasgow's Message 10
4. Local Commissioners Year in Review 14
5. Registrar's Year in Review 20
6. The Commission – Who makes up the Commission 28
7. Our Performance – Review of operations 32
8. Challenges and Outlook 50
9. Governance 57
10. Financial Overview 2009-2010 69
11. Financial Statement 72
12. Appendices 105
13. Glossary of Terms 109
14. Contact Details 110

FAMILY RESPONSIBLITIES COMMISSION
Cairns Commonwealth Centre
Level 3, 107 Lake Street, Cairns
PO Box 5438, Cairns Qld 4870
Ph: 07 4057 3870
Fax: 07 4041 0974
enquiries@frcq.org.au
www.frcq.org.au

Families by Karen Gibson

Preamble - Noel Pearson

"The Family Responsibilities Commission is a critical component of Welfare Reform in Cape York Peninsula. It has been designed by Aboriginal Australians of Cape York and is driven by community members.

The FRC is a formidable force for change; it is our most important means to rebuild social norms around education and the welfare of our children.

I pay my respects to the local Commissioners, respected community elders who have stepped forward to take responsibility. The improvements in school attendance – without which provisioning of improved education in communities would be meaningless – is to a large extent due to your efforts."

Noel Pearson

Strategic Overview

Our Vision

To support community members through a legislative framework to seek and receive access to appropriate support services that allow welfare reform areas to restore the social fabric of their communities.

Our Objectives

- Provide effective and efficient client services that positively influence the acceptance of the Commission in the community and the authority of the Commission by community members.
- Positively influence and support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in the welfare reform community areas at the individual, family and community level.
- Assist residents in the welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals of the community.

Service Charter Statement

The Family Responsibilities Commission knows that you value good customer service. Our aim is to give you the best service we can. We will work with clients and stakeholders to deliver outputs for the State and Commonwealth Government, that achieve the outcomes sought for the welfare reform communities. In doing so, the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. We will take up the challenge of unconventional or creative thinking that may be needed to address the complex problems that confront our communities.

▲ *Local Commissioners from Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge with Commissioner David Glasgow and Pauline Peel former Deputy Director-General of ATSIS*

Strategic Overview

The Family Responsibilities Commission – about us

As part of the broader Cape York Welfare Reform Trial, the Commission is the key plank in a unique trial aimed at restoring local authority and socially responsible standards of behaviour in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The Commission was established by the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* and commenced operations on 1 July 2008.

Local Commissioners are Elders or respected community members who encourage individuals appearing before the Commission to take the steps needed to make lasting changes which will benefit their health, wellbeing, home and community life.

The Commissioner and Local Commissioners meet regularly to conference clients and make referrals to community support services or in certain circumstances, to Centrelink for income management.

Policy Context

Our activities support the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial and the following Queensland Government ambitions stated in Toward Q 2 Tomorrow's Queensland:

- Fair - supporting safe and caring communities
- Healthy - making Queenslanders Australia's healthiest people
- Smart - delivering world class education and training
- Our activities also support the following Department of Communities goals

Leading the COAG "Closing the Gap" agenda

1. Supporting Queensland's children and families at risk of entering the child protection system through earlier intervention and better access to a range of services
2. Coordinating improvements to service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities.

Our Challenge

The Commission delivers services through a legislative framework to communities that are culturally diverse and geographically remote. Each community is different, however each can be characterised by the entrenched disadvantage of Indigenous community members. Over-crowded housing, high rates of Indigenous welfare dependency and multi-generational poverty has resulted in communities with high numbers of individuals and families with complex needs.

Our challenge is to work collaboratively with partner agencies, as part of a linked service system to engage, empower and enable individuals, families and the wider community to make positive and lasting change.

Strategic Objectives

The objectives of the Commission, the practical means of implementing each objective and the key performance indicators by which the Commission can introspectively assess performance and be independently evaluated are:

Strategic Overview

Objective One

Provide effective and efficient client services that positively influence the acceptance of the Commission in the community and the authority of the Commission by community members.

Strategies

- Support Local Commissioners in their role
- Continually improve performance through strong governance and management of resources
- Develop and support staff
- Process agency notifications in a timely manner
- Conduct client conferences in a way that empowers and supports the individual and undertake case planning and monitoring
- Conduct show cause proceedings in a fair and just manner

Performance Indicators

- Local Commissioners report increased respect for their authority from community members
- Acceptance of the Local Commissioners by outside agencies and Government departments as sources of insight and information increases
- Attendance of clients at conference increases, indicating greater acceptance of the Commission within the community
- Compliance with case plans increases, indicating greater acceptance of the authority of the Commission by community members

Objective Two

Support restoration and positively influence the wider acceptance of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in the welfare reform community areas at the individual, family and community level.

Strategies

- Appropriately acknowledge Indigenous tradition and custom
- Facilitate early intervention in relation to matters
- Make appropriate use of community support services
- Encourage community members who are the subject of a notification to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour
- Promote the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living in the welfare reform areas

Performance Indicators

- School attendance increases, notifications from Education Queensland correspondingly decrease
- Criminal offending decreases, notifications from Magistrate Courts correspondingly decrease
- Children at risk of harm and/or actually harmed decreases, notifications from Department of Communities, (Child Safety Services) correspondingly decrease
- Breach of tenancy arrangements decrease, notifications from the Department of Communities, Housing and Homelessness Services correspondingly decrease

Objective Three

Assist residents in the welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals of the community.

Strategies

- Promote understanding of the mandate of the Commission to deal with matters in a way which supports and strengthens local Indigenous authority
- Promote understanding of the Commission as part of the Welfare Reform Trial and part of a wider service network aimed at enabling individuals and families to improve the quality of their life
- Establish and operate a service that empowers the individual and families to assume personal responsibility for their problem and the resolution of their problem

Performance Indicators

- Applications to attend conference as a voluntary client increases, indicating people are assuming primary responsibility for their issues by actively seeking solutions
- Local Commissioners and significant others report an increase of individual responsibility in the community
- Requests for Local Commissioners to advise existing and potential external service providers and agencies increases, indicating local people are actively participating in the decision making process

Commissioner Glasgow's Message

From the Conference Room

The Commission operates in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. A number of our Commissioners are Traditional Owners and Elders of their communities. The Commission recognises we are visitors to the country we travel across and conference in. I acknowledge and pay respect to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Teachers of these lands - those of the past, of today and of the future.

In the past year the Local Commissioners and the staff of the Commission have continuously carried out our functions with dedication, efficiency and respect. We are now seeing real improvements and acceptance in each of the communities in which we work.

The Commission is charged with the obligation of encouraging and supporting the re-emergence of codes of conduct in relation to school attendance and children's safety and wellbeing which have not been the norm for many years. To ensure the Commission discharges its obligations, we have continually reviewed our operations and procedures, particularly those which affect the day to day lives of the people within our jurisdiction. The Local Commissioners have been pivotal in gaining the trust and understanding of community members in regard to school attendance obligations and the rights of families to live peacefully and in safety.

The dedication, commitment and determination of my colleagues, the Local Commissioners, continues to inspire and motivate me. They are committed to bringing about lasting change, and show resolve, care and courage in discharging their responsibilities. Across the communities, I believe there is wide acknowledgement that we listen carefully to the difficulties faced by people and that we are fair in how we reach our decisions. There is frustration with the momentum of change and degrees of commitment by some, but there is also growing community understanding that change must occur and each community member has a role to play. The success of the Commission to date can, in large part, be attributed to these women and men who each day live their lives in the communities in which they have made recommendations and decisions about their friends, family and neighbours.

The Commissioners have continued chairing conferences, readily dealing with any difficult and challenging situations that arise during conferences and with the personal consequences of their decisions. Commissioners from Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge have completed dispute resolution mediation and Justice of the Peace (Qualified) training and dates have been set for the delivery of these programs for the remaining Commissioners in their respective communities.

The Commission has previously provided, and will continue to make available, a minimum of ten places in each Mediation and JP training program to community members from each community. This is in response to community interest and in accord with our obligation to encourage the re-establishment of local Indigenous authority.

I look forward to all the Local Commissioners being able to meet together in Cairns in July 2010 for a period of discussion and consultation. These meetings will give the Commissioners the opportunity to discuss between themselves the operations of the Commission in each community over the past year in addition to matters of mutual interest. There will also be an organised opportunity for them to meet with and express their views directly to the service providers.

Commissioner Glasgow's Message

Retiring and New Commissioners

The Commission welcomes six new Commissioners - Dorothy Pootchemunka and Douglas Ahlers for Aurukun, Irene Hammett and Harry Bowen for Hope Vale and Daniel Fisher and Beryl Shuan for Mossman Gorge. The new Commissioners will replace the five Commissioners who have retired during the past year. To each I extend the Commission's and their community's gratitude for their services to the Commission and their commitment to welfare reform.

It has also been pleasing for me to observe the growing friendships that have developed between the Commissioners and members of our staff. This has resulted in close working bonds being formed which have in no small way been responsible for a greater understanding between us all.

It is with sadness that I acknowledge the passing of a founding Mossman Gorge Commissioner and Elder of the Mossman Gorge community on 4 March 2010. She had been ill and in hospital for many months prior to her passing, the Commissioner is greatly missed by her large family and all of us who knew and worked with her.

Service Providers

In the past year the Commission's clients have received the support of many service providers, some of whom continue to suffer from the reoccurring difficulties of retaining suitably qualified personnel. This, particularly in the case of Wellbeing Centre in Aurukun, has caused delay in clients receiving adequate and timely services.

I wish to record in particular the efforts and generous cooperation of the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services), the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) and the Government Coordination Officers of the Regional Operations Centre. Their staff have done much in the past year to substantially improve the delivery of quality services to many of our clients and the communities in the far north. They have met regularly with and listened to the Local Commissioners and have adapted their processes and visits to the requirements of each community. Their respective services now more readily accommodate the needs and responsibilities of our clients.

Commission Staff

I acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our small Commission family in the Cairns Registry and in each Community. Their tireless efforts have enabled the Commission to meet all goals of this year's operations. The Commission is also indeed fortunate to have skilled resident Local Coordinators whose dedication and inclusive common sense approach has not only greatly helped with community acceptance of the Commission but also has assisted in enhancing community respect for our Commissioners and their role. My Commission could not function as effectively without these officers.

To continue building relationships, each member of our Cairns staff is requested to visit each community, observe our workings there and gain an understanding of the conditions under which our clients and resident staff choose to live and work.

Our calendar for this financial year has been completed with only minor modifications where significant local events have prevented us conferencing. We have ensured all matters have been dealt with in a timely fashion.

Commissioner Glasgow's Message

The obligation we have undertaken to case manage our clients and to ensure each is offered effective assistance from service providers, is proving a challenge and will continue to be so in the year ahead. This will be our first priority for the final eighteen months of the trial, to which we have allocated significant financial and human resources. Our Principal Case Manager, Sharon Newcomb, has managed this very difficult and challenging area of our operations in the past year. Dealing daily with service providers who face their own staffing, resource and quality control challenges, has involved diplomacy and patience of significant proportions. I acknowledge Ms Newcomb's dedication and commitment to her role. Our goal has been and remains that our clients receive quality and timely attention.

In my role as Commissioner I travel to communities each and every week and thus the organisation and management of operations rests with our Registrar Tammy Sovenyhazi assisted by her executive team of Noel Morich and Sharon Newcomb. I acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our Registrar Tammy Sovenyhazi without whose management and personal skills we would not be able to work within the communities as effectively as we have.

David Glasgow
Family Responsibilities Commissioner

Cairns based Registry staff with the Local Coordinators for Aurukun and Mossman Gorge

▲ *Local Coordinator for Mossman Gorge Karen Gibson with Thudo Thompson, Zayshen Bucanan, Allen Gibson, Mahalia Spratt, Casilda Creek, Shyeeina Henry, Kainan Buchanan, Paula Creek and Luanna Creek with the results of a very productive arts and craft day.*

Local Commissioners Year in Review

Aurukun Commissioners' Report

During the past year our journey has been at times like the ocean around Aurukun, sometimes bumpy and sometimes smooth, but from this journey has come new experiences and knowledge of how to handle different situations. People are very interested in finding out how the Commission is working and the outcomes being gained from the work we are undertaking on behalf of our community. The Local Commissioners now have the opportunity to speak to many politicians and leaders of large corporations about our community and people. When we were first asked to speak, we all felt intimidated and we were reluctant, however we again proved to ourselves and to others that we can do it.

All of the Commissioners in Aurukun have a heavy workload we hold conference every second week for three days and conference about 45 clients. At the end of the three days we are drained and very tired, but it is a good tired - we think it is like catching a fish. When you are pulling in a fish you never give up, you never know what is at the end of the line, if it turns out to be a good result it is a good tired feeling. That is the feeling we have after three days of conferences, it is hard but it is showing good results.

We believe we are finally on the right path to transform our lives and the community as a whole into a better way of life. We always tell our people we are here to help and not to fear attending conferences. As the year has passed it has been good to see more and more people attending conferences with smiles on their faces as they now realise we are also here to give them a pat on the back for their achievements and the progress they have made. One of the hurdles of the past six months has been the new teaching methods in the school, love it or hate it more children are going to school and we cannot wait to see the end of year results.

Some will soon start their third year as Local Commissioners and with the two new Local Commissioners Dorothy Pootchemunka and Douglas Ahlers we all look forward to the coming year. To put our new knowledge to good use with the chance to move our community towards change and to help the individuals to shoulder their responsibilities and move forward for the betterment of the Aurukun community. The Commissioners ask that all the referral agencies knuckle down and work with us to make the breakthrough with the repeat truants and law breakers to help these clients get what they need, whether it is better education for their children or a better family life.

We also want to thank all the people who have helped us along our learning path and give special gratitude to Commissioner Glasgow who is untiring with his encouragement, assistance and knowledge.

Aurukun at Sunset

Local Coordinator Profile

Profile

Profile: Aurukun Coordinator Dellis Gledhill

Dellis Gledhill is the Aurukun Coordinator for the Commission, she is based full time in Aurukun and provides administrative, logistical and organisational support to the Local Commissioners. Dellis is the second youngest of five children born and educated in the North Queensland town of Mossman. After completing high school, Dellis embarked on a career in the Defence Force. Dellis initially enlisted in the Signal Corp in 1975 but soon transferred to the Corp of Military Police, Special Investigation Branch where she served for 15 years in Australia and the United States, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Dellis has two children, the eldest also chose a career path in the Defence Force and the youngest is currently studying at university.

Dellis is a gifted all round athlete representing Queensland as a schoolgirl in long distance running and basketball, playing top level competition basketball in the ACT and representing the Australian Defence Force in domestic and international basketball competitions.

In 1990 Dellis resigned from the Defence Force, returned to North Queensland and began her second career working for the Department of Corrective Services in the Indigenous communities of the far north. In 1993 Dellis and her partner Duncan relocated to Kowanyama to work with the Council coordinating the Justice Group, Probation and Parole supervision and Justice Mediation. In 1994 Dellis became a Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) and in 1997 began helping facilitate Council By-Laws and Magistrates Court sittings. In 2007 Dellis received an award from the Department of Justice and Attorney General acknowledging her contribution as a Justice of the Peace.

With the introduction of the Alcohol Management Plan in the Cape communities in 2003 Dellis once again played an integral part working with the community. Drafting, writing and presenting the Kowanyama Justice Group Alcohol Management Plan to the Liquor Licensing Board. In 2007 Dellis again sought new challenges, relocating with her partner Duncan to Weipa to work establishing the new Probation and Parole Hub which covered Aurukun, Napranum, Lockhart River, Coen, Mapoon and Weipa. In 2008 Dellis was again recognised with an award from the Department of Corrective Services acknowledging her work in the communities.

In October 2008 Dellis was seconded from Probation and Parole to the Commission as the Local Coordinator in Aurukun for an initial period of six months to replace the departing Coordinator. During this time she found the work both challenging and rewarding and could see, even in the early stages of the Commission's work, the positive changes happening in the community. Dellis decided she wanted to be a part of this exciting initiative and applied to work as the Local Coordinator in Aurukun for the remainder of the trial.

The many faces of Dellis Gledhill

Local Commissioners Year in Review

Coen Commissioners' Report

As Commissioners for the Family Responsibilities Commission we have experienced the ups and downs of our people in Coen over the last year. We are proud to say the Commission is now more accepted in our community. Attendance at conference has improved, with most people scheduled to attend now turning up willing to discuss the reasons why they have been called before the Commission and working with the Commissioners to find solutions. We held a conference at Silver Plains outstation and are scheduled to conference at Kulpa outstation soon ensuring that all clients receive a good service. Many of our clients are now doing a good job, they are getting themselves sorted out, some slower than others but regardless people are getting debts paid, children to school and looking after their homes and family. When we first made decisions to put people on the BasicsCard, people did not like the idea but they are now telling us they have more savings and there is less arguing over money.

Coen has had a lot of change this year with the new school curriculum under the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy being introduced in the first term. As Commissioners we continue to encourage the younger children to attend school everyday and work with the older children to start getting ready for boarding school. School attendance in Coen is consistently above the State average in Queensland and the kids were recently congratulated on their school attendance with Gold, Silver and Bronze gift vouchers. The Elders provide guidance and support to children and have always held schooling as a very important aspect of our lives alongside culture.

There have been many positives in the community this year. The different clans and people have come together to resolve land issues and develop the Working in Country program with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services. The number of dry houses continues to increase; there are now nine dry houses in Coen Township and all the outstations are dry communities. The Elders of the community have also been working with the Queensland Museum on the recognition of lost culture and artifacts project, this has included visits to museums by our Elders. There have been some difficulties in the past year with some fighting and mobile phone based cyber bullying but we as Commissioners have worked with the community members and the police to sort through these challenges.

Coen Local Commissioners receiving certificates of appreciation from the Hon. Desley Boyle MP

As Commissioners we have completed Justice of the Peace (Magistrate's Court) first round training, hosted Child Safety Services communication workshops, and worked with service providers to improve delivery and outcomes for Coen. We look forward to the coming year, to working with clients, growing in our role as Commissioners and assisting Coen and surrounding outstations to reach their full potential.

Local Commissioners Year in Review

Hope Vale Commissioners' Report

Our second year as Local Commissioners has continued to be both challenging and demanding for us, but at the same time very rewarding. Over the past 12 months we have noticed positive changes in individuals and the overall community, but know we still have a long way to go. The implementation of the diversionary program for clients who commit minor breaches of the Alcohol Management Plan (AMP) guidelines appears to be working well, with a significant number of clients taking up this opportunity.

There have been some difficult and complex situations in relation to children attending school and the Commissioners are continuing to work with the parents and carers who are still having difficulties, to ensure there are good support networks in place and that assistance is available when needed. We have already seen some positive results from this initiative and are hopeful that school attendance will soon increase. The Commissioners have also begun to be more actively involved in the school, recently representing the Commission at the awards presentation night.

In addition this year has provided the opportunity for many of the Commissioners to increase their community engagement work. Current Projects include assisting homeowners to establish four dry houses in the community and supporting the youth of Hope Vale with Commissioner Gibson continuing to be an inspiration, working tirelessly for the Indigenous Young Leadership program. The Local Commissioners have also been actively supporting the Ending Family Violence program recently implemented by the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services).

The Local Commissioners have also been undertaking professional development to assist us to represent the Commission in various public forums. Commissioner Gibson represented the Commission at the ACOSS conference in March this year in Canberra with support from the Hope Vale Local Coordinator and the Principal Case Manager. As Local Commissioners we feel that the acceptance of the Commission within the community has continued grow throughout the year, resulting in positive outcomes being achieved by individuals and their families through their personal drive and engagement with the stakeholders. Our relationship with all key stakeholders has continued to strengthen with these successes, but we know there is still more work to be done in relation to improving service delivery.

We are proud of the outcomes achieved by all over the past 12 months and all the Commissioners were very pleased to receive recognition of our work personally from the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

Local Commissioner Brian Cobus demonstrates traditional spear throwing techniques

Wetlands near Hope Vale

Commissioner Glasgow with Local Commissioners Hart, Cobus and Gibson

Local Commissioners Year in Review

Mossman Gorge Commissioners' Report

The success of the Mossman Gorge Commissioners has been broadened this year to include two new Commissioners, Beryl Shuan and Daniel Fischer. Beryl and Daniel were publicly recognised and commended on their appointments as Local Commissioners for the Family Responsibilities Commission at a welcoming ceremony by the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

Local Commissioners Bamboo, Spratt and Shuan at the Wuchopperen open day

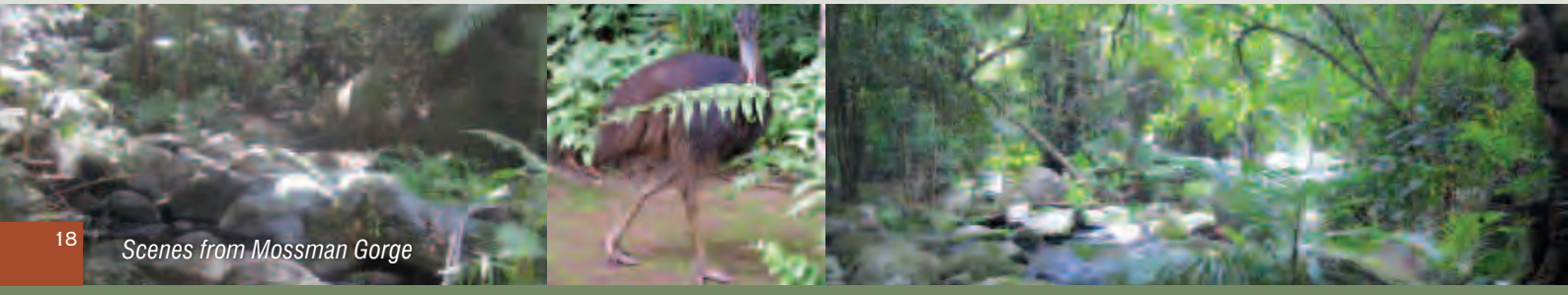
The Commissioners have actively promoted the importance of school attendance within our community over the past 12 months, and have successfully contributed to the increase in the primary school attendance rate. The Commissioners have also played a significant role in reducing bullying on the school bus by supporting community members to ride on the bus with the children to the school, eliminating this as a reason for the parents not to send their children to school.

Mossman Gorge has increased the number of dry houses by four in the past 12 months, making a total of 11. The Local Commissioners and Local Coordinator Karen Gibson have played a crucial role in facilitating and supporting dry house meetings and supporting community residents to maintain their dry houses. This has been achieved by working hand in hand with Mossman Gorge Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Incorporated.

The Commissioners have noticed that our community members along with Indigenous families from Mossman town are starting to engage with the service providers more often. The Commissioners have also become more active in establishing and strengthening the Women's Group and have supported the establishment of the Young Men's Group in the last 12 months.

The Commissioners have now completed the first stage of our Justice of the Peace course and attended training in the Gorge and in Cairns in Domestic Violence reduction and mediation. We were also pleased to attend the Happy Healthy Families community event at the Wuchopperen Health Service as Local Commissioners and were kept busy talking to the stallholders about our work and responsibilities as Commissioners.

In closing, we would like to recognise the sad passing of one of our fellow Commissioners. She made an incredible contribution to the Gorge in her life time both as a respected community member and a Commissioner and we will continue to carry on her good work in the community.



Scenes from Mossman Gorge

Ending Family Violence Program

Beginning in March 2010 the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) and the Commission agreed to jointly conduct Ending Family Violence programs in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Some of the Local Coordinators undertook the required training and now cofacilitate the courses with officers from the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) in Aurukun and Hope Vale. A total of nine courses have been conducted in the four communities under the current agreement and the current funding will ensure sufficient courses will continue to be delivered until at least March 2011 when the agreement will be reassessed.

Participants of the course undertake a self assessment to assist them to identify and admit to their personal issues. This can be very confrontational and is a personal challenge for many participants. Group members reflect individually and as a group on the violence that not only plagued their early life as they were growing up, but also the violence that they themselves have perpetrated as adults. Prior to the end of the course the participants are asked to complete a future plan showing what steps they plan to take to address their issues and who they would talk to as a support person when they felt the need in the future. During the most recent courses held in Mossman Gorge and Aurukun the participants reported moments of humour and real joy when their fellow participants made personal breakthroughs in their previously held attitudes and beliefs.

Members of the latest Aurukun group were keen to instill change and become better role models to others in an attempt to encourage a more harmonious way of life in their community. Participants stated that they were proud of their achievements this week and one was quoted as saying “I feel a real peace inside of me because of this program”. The cofacilitator echoed the positive attitude of the participants, “This week’s participants in the Ending Family Violence Program, held in Aurukun, deserve some well earned praise. Each group member contributed to the activities, group discussions and participated in some very demanding soul searching, with honesty, integrity and a genuine desire to make changes in their lives and their community as a whole.”

In Hope Vale and Coen many of the participants shared personal stories throughout the program relating to their personal cycle of life. For some this included violence and imprisonment. Feedback received from participants in the latest Hope Vale course showed that it had given the participants an opportunity to talk to each other about their personal experiences, identify acceptable and unacceptable behaviours and obtain information about the services available within their community to assist them. Many of the participants stated they had learnt a lot from the program and would continue taking positive steps to address their personal issues.

Mossman Gorge in the wet season

Registrar's Year in Review

From the desk of the Registrar

When reflecting on the Commission's achievements during its second year of operation I look back to where we started and what was achieved in the first year of operation. In the first year of operation the Commission focused on commencement of regular conference sittings in each of the communities and setting up the Commission. This includes the creation of office and residential infrastructure both in Cairns and the four communities, employment and training of staff and development of information sharing agreements with the many stakeholders of the Commission.

The second year of operation focused on the consolidation of processes from an operational perspective and the adaptation of policies and procedures into practical operation.

The Commission achieved a significant amount of work throughout the past year conducting 1,542 conferences which resulted in 216 Family Responsibility Agreements, 208 Orders and subsequently 583 referrals to community support services.

In addition to this we saw the Local Commissioners expand their knowledge base by their ongoing participation in conferences which further developed their knowledge of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* and the legal framework in which we operate. Commissioners also attended many training opportunities that were developed as a result of consultation with the Commissioners. Specifically the Local Commissioners attended Justice of the Peace (Qualified and Magistrates Court) training as well as mediation training in both Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Mediation training for Aurukun and Coen will be conducted in the first half of the 2010-11 financial year. Further development opportunities are currently being developed and will continue for the life of the Commission.

The Commissioners continue to grow in their levels of authority originally established through their appointments as Commissioners. This is evidenced by the many requests received for meetings with Commonwealth and State Government Ministers, Directors-General and Government Champions, and other state departments as well as CEO's from several major Australian companies seeking advice on various matters. The ongoing requests for interactions with the Local Commissioners led to the development of policies regarding the protocols for engaging with Commissioners. This is to be formalised in the second half of 2010.

Over the past year a number of Commissioners retired from their positions and subsequently six new Commissioners were appointed by the Governor in Council in March 2010. The Commission would like to thank past Commissioners for their hard work and dedication to seeing the Commission's work materialise on the ground for the benefit of community members in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. We also welcome with open arms the new appointees and wish them well in their endeavours with the Commission. The Commission would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to the Mossman Gorge Commissioner and Elder who passed away in March of this year, she is fondly remembered by all who had the good fortune of working with her.

Registrar's Year in Review

The Commission continued to meet challenges identified in its first year of operation relating to the small size of our organisation, including both statutory obligations as well as public service obligations. A number of new staff were engaged in this year to assist with meeting these obligations.

The number of notifications received from notifying agencies continued at a constant pace (4,364 received for the year). The natural flow-on effect of this was a very heavy conferencing schedule to ensure matters were dealt with in a timely fashion (1,542 conferences held for the year). Further challenges faced were managing the large caseload (833 to year end) and ensuring that each client received access to the services they were referred to.

This year the Commission has focussed on identifying and improving ways to increase efficiencies in the administration of the Commission, including the construction of a new database and employing additional staff to assist with case management. In addition, the Commission has been examining the extent to which amendments may be possible to the legislation and processes which govern the Commission.

The dedication and commitment of the communities and staff engaged by both government and non-government organisations to welfare reform remains evident. I would like to pay tribute and give thanks to the many people on the ground, who continue to work with the Commission in meeting its objectives.

To the staff of our partners, the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, Queensland Government and Australian Government, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for their ongoing assistance.

To the staff of the Commission who work in the Cairns Registry and our four remote offices, I express my appreciation for their determined efforts to assist with the operation of the Commission, in sometimes extremely complex and difficult circumstances.

Commissioner Glasgow continues to inspire all who know him with his tireless dedication to the Commission, our staff and our clients. His candor and willingness to get the job done keeps us all focussed on the job at hand. He maintains his high level of expectation that government agencies and organisations funded to provide services to the communities do so in a way that is timely and appropriate to the needs of the relevant communities. He continues to lead by example and is an inspiration to each of us.

I am always heartened by the enthusiasm and optimism displayed by our Local Commissioners to do their very best to see change occur in their communities. They are an absolute joy to work with and an inspiration to me personally. They are the cornerstones of the Commission and the reason why the Commission has been so well accepted in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

The second year of operation was as challenging as the first, however, seeing the hard work of the previous year stabilise provided a great deal of satisfaction and pride for all involved.

Tammy Sovenyhazi

Registrar

Registrar's Year in Review

Local Commissioners, leaders beyond their community

The Local Commissioners from the four welfare communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge have shown considerable expertise and determination during the past year. Continuing to up-skill themselves, undertaking Mediation training and Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court and Qualified) training and working tirelessly to increase the level of acceptance and respect for the Commission in the community.

In recognition of this outstanding work the Local Commissioners are increasingly being acknowledged by the Queensland and Commonwealth Government for their commitment, expertise and knowledge. In September 2009 the Local Commissioners were awarded Certificates of Appreciation for their work and personally congratulated by the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

In December 2009 ten Local Commissioners from Coen, Mossman Gorge, Aurukun and Hope Vale travelled to Cairns at the invitation of the Honourable Jenny Macklin MP, Federal Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The Minister wished to hear directly from the Commissioners in regard to the operations of the Commission and how it impacts on their communities.

A celebration was held at Parliament House on Thursday, 25 February 2010, in honour of the insertion of the new Preamble into the Constitution of Queensland. Commissioners Doris Poonkamelya and Vera Koomeeta were invited to attend the ceremony and were supported on the trip by the Registrar, Tammy Sovenyhazi.

The Commissioners describe their experience in Brisbane and at Parliament house as:

> "In one word it was awesome, we feel very privileged and overwhelmed to be invited. It is an historic moment in time that will never be repeated."

The Preamble declares that the people of Queensland:

> *"honour the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share; and pay tribute to their unique values, and their ancient and enduring cultures, which deepen and enrich the life of our community."*

Commissioner Victor Gibson continues to be a master of many trades, organising traditional activities for the Hope Vale youth such as fishing competitions and hunting expeditions and providing inspirational support to the youth leadership program. Commissioner Gibson, in conjunction with other community leaders, has lobbied hard to obtain the corporate sponsorship which will ensure the youth program continues. Commissioner Gibson was also invited to attend and address the ACOSS conference in Canberra in March 2010. He was supported by the Principal Case Manager and Hope Vale Local Coordinator.

Local Commissioners Koomeeta and Poonkamelya at the botanical gardens in Brisbane during their visit for the constitutional preamble ceremony

Registrar's Year in Review

Local Commissioners, a changing of the guard

The past 12 months has been a very positive and productive one for the Commission and this is largely due to the work and efforts of the 23 Local Commissioners from the four communities. The Local Commissioners who joined the Commission in the formative stages have undertaken ground breaking work and have laid the foundation for the Commission to be accepted and respected in their communities. The last 12 months has also seen many of the Local Commissioners take on other roles, both within their communities and elsewhere.

The Commissioner, Registrar, Local Coordinators and Cairns based staff would like to take the opportunity to thank those Local Commissioners who have resigned from the Commission over the last 12 months to take up other roles. Former Commissioner Noelene Denman from Mossman Gorge has resigned and a much respected community Elder and Commissioner from Mossman Gorge has passed on. In addition we would all like to thank former Commissioners Perry Yunkaporta from Aurukun and Desmond Bowen and June Pearson from Hope Vale for their work helping to establish the Commission in their respective communities.

New Local Commissioners Fischer and Shuan with the Honorable Desley Boyle

It is testimony to the high regard in which the Commission is now viewed in the communities that senior and respected community members were willing and eager to fill the vacancies created by the departing Commissioners and continue their work. We would all like to welcome the new Commissioners in Mossman Gorge, Berryl Shuan and Daniel Fischer. Commissioners Shuan and Fisher are both respected members of their community involved in many community activities.

New Local Commissioners Ahlers and Pootchemunka being congratulated by Commissioner Glasgow

In Aurukun Commissioners Douglas Ahlers and Dorothy Pootchemunka bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the Commission both for their community and the work of the Commission. Commissioner Ahlers has worked for many years in the areas of Health, Justice and Governance; Commissioner Pootchemunka is dedicated to continuing her work with the children of Aurukun.

New Local Commissioners Hammett and Bowen at an FRC function in Cairns

In Hope Vale we welcome Commissioners Harold Bowen and Irene Hammett. Commissioner Bowen is a tradesperson, talented artist, and dedicated sports coach. Commissioner Irene Hammett is a fluent speaker and teacher of her native Guugu Yimithirr language, an acknowledged expert on the native flora and fauna of the Hope Vale region and a respected Elder and school teacher.

There is no doubt that the Commission will miss the experience and knowledge of so many talented and dedicated individuals, but the Commission will also be much enhanced by the addition of the talent, dedication and enthusiasm of the new Commissioners.

Registrar's Year in Review

Highlights of the Year

Visit to Alice Springs

Comissioner David Glasgow and Registrar Tammy Sovenyhazi travelled to Alice Springs on the 3rd and 4th of December 2009 at the request of the Central Land Council and the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress in the Northern Territory. They were invited to deliver a discussion paper on the key objectives and operations of the Commission, and address a public forum. The forum sought to prompt discussion about the Commission model and its potential application to Alice Springs and central Australia.

Lecture at James Cook University

Commissioner David Glasgow presented a lecture on 20 May 2010 on the strategies, objectives and operations of the Commission at the Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Cultural Centre at the invitation of the School of Arts and Social Sciences from James Cook University. The lecture was attended by 80 academics, members of the legal fraternity and the public. The lecture was followed by an energetic and informative question time.

Development of Relationships with Coordinating Agencies

Principal Case Manager, Sharon Newcomb has made substantial progress forging relationships with partner agencies in the last 12 months. Interactions and information exchange with Child Safety has been enhanced by the signing of an MOU and the appointment of additional Child Safety Officers in the communities. Discussions were also held between the Local Commissioners and Child Safety Officers followed by a visit and community information sessions in each Welfare Reform community in conjunction with the Commission. This has further enhanced the solid network between the Commission, Department of Communities (Child Safety Services), and the communities. These gains will be further enhanced by the recent appointment of two Business Support Officers within the Commission who will further support the establishment of relationships with service providers and clients.

Local Commissioners receive official acknowledgement

A vital element in the acceptance and success of the Commission is community involvement and ownership. The Local Commissioners live and work in the communities which they represent, providing invaluable insight and local knowledge to the Commission. The local Commissioners are respected persons within their communities and all have demonstrated leadership and conviction to the vision of the Commission since the beginning of the trial. The Commission would not be able to function without their dedication and work, which is often above and beyond their required duties.

The Local Commissioners have recently been acknowledged by the Queensland and Commonwealth Government, they were awarded Certificates of Appreciation for their work and personally congratulated by the Honourable Desley Boyle MP, Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships in September 2009. In December 2009 Commissioners representing all four communities were invited to Cairns to confer directly with the Honourable Jenny Macklin MP, Federal Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Registrar's Year in Review

School Attendance

Aurukun Local Commissioners presenting awards to school children at the McKenzie celebrations

School attendance has increased significantly in Aurukun since the Commission began operating and all other communities have achieved, and are maintaining, high levels of school attendance thanks to the efforts of the Local Commissioners, staff of the Queensland Department of Education and Training and the Attendance Case Managers employed by Cape York Partnerships. The Commissioners in Mossman Gorge also have been actively promoting attendance ensuring the children are on time to catch the school bus and supporting community members who now ride on the bus to reduce bullying.

The Local Commissioners in Aurukun are actively working to increase attendance through formal meetings with the Principal and informally by actively encouraging children to attend school in addition to sitting in classrooms to ensure the good behaviour of students. The work of the Hope Vale Commissioners is producing results with Hope Vale school attendance stabilising. In Coen, Commissioner Port randomly walks the streets of Coen during school hours encouraging kids who are not attending school to attend. The Commission has also made awards available to each school to present to individual students for best attendance at the end of year awards.

Conference Attendance

Commissioner Glasgow with Local Commissioners Peter, Liddy and Pratt at the Silverplains Conference sitting

Attendances at conferences are increasing, demonstrating the acceptance of, and commitment to, the Commission in the communities and the success of the work the Commission has been undertaking in restoring community values. The Commission Executive Management Team and the Local Commissioners are working to raise the attendance level even higher. The Local Commissioners are actively promoting the benefits of the Commission at every opportunity and the Commission has begun sitting at outstations to ensure the service is available to all residents. The first remote sitting of the Commission took place at the Coen outstation of Silverplains in September 2009.

Dry houses

Local Commissioner Peter and his partner Hazel outside their home

The community of Aurukun is a designated dry community and no alcohol is permitted within the community boundaries. Hope Vale is an alcohol restricted community, Coen and Mossman Gorge do not have any alcohol restrictions. A key strategy in targeting alcohol misuse in the communities is the establishment of 'Dry House' precincts. Dry Houses are registered with the local council and police station and no alcohol is permitted on the property.

The Local Commissioners work with residents to maintain and increase the dry house network by working with the local Aboriginal councils and police to establish new Dry Houses. Dry Houses in Mossman Gorge have increased to eleven, Coen to nine and Hope Vale to four demonstrating a grass roots commitment by community members to actively work in restoring the social fabric of their community.

CHILD SAFETY SERVICES

Under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*, the Commission is advised of substantiated and unsubstantiated notifications and Child Concern Reports to Child Safety Services. A Child Concern Report is information reported to Child Safety Services that has been preliminarily investigated but which requires no further action based on the available information. The parents and carers involved in a Child Concern Report may be the subject of the investigation, they often have no knowledge of the report or the subsequent investigation. In the welfare reform communities, the Commission is now advised of completed investigations involving Child Concern Reports. The Commissioners then assess the need to discuss the factors contained in the report with the relevant community members. This gives the parents and carers the opportunity to address any concerns Child Safety Services may have due to the investigation and prevent an escalation of the situation.

"We knew there would be some trouble for our kids if we did not take some action" a mother reports to the Child Safety officer. "There had been trouble in the house and the police had to be called, there was violence and the children were all around and very upset" the mother recalls. After things had settled down the parents decided to discuss the situation with the Local Commissioners. "We knew that Child Safety and the Commissioners would be notified of what happened, so we asked if we could come and see the Commissioners next time they were having a conference. We had been there before when the kids did not go to school, so we knew we could talk about things".

After discussing the situation with the Commissioners, a case plan was agreed. The couple asked to be income managed and referred to support services. The mother started attending the Wellbeing Centre for counseling. The father attended the three day Ending Family Violence course and the Men's Group for follow up support.

The subsequent investigation by Child Safety Services found the children happy, healthy and attending school on a regular basis, the house was clean and the fridge and cupboards were full. The mother was receiving counseling and support regularly and spoke openly of the improved family life and increased responsibility of the father towards the children. The mother advised that; "the BasicsCard makes it easy to budget and now after the bills and food are paid for, there is money leftover for new things like clothes and kids toys, there is less for grog, but that's OK". The Child Safety Services took no further action and is working with the family and the Commission to help them stay on track.

Commission hearings often provide an important early intervention and monitoring service. The Commissioners can "put clients on notice" that continued inappropriate behaviour may result in further action by Child Safety Services. This allows the Commission to work together with families that are the subject of a Child Concern Report or are subject to an Intervention with Parental Agreement or Case Plans with Child Safety Services. The Local Commissioners are also able to advise community members and service providers of the role and function of Child Safety Services.

Local Commissioner Profile

Aurukun Local Commissioners and Local Coordinator at a training week in Cairns

Ada and her granddaughter

The Woolla sisters

Local Commissioner Profile

Profile: Aurukun Commissioner Ada Woolla

I am a Wik Munkan Clan woman, one of a family of eight children who were all born and raised in Aurukun, I have two adult children Lawrence and Heather, two grandsons and seven grand-daughters and all the family live in Aurukun with their families.

My passion is education and school attendance. I believe quality education is the way towards future employment opportunities for the Aurukun community. I was educated at Aurukun Primary School when the school was a dirt floored bark hut with only one teacher, no chairs and a slate board and slate pencils for students up to grade six. I went on to attend the Presbyterian Girls' boarding College in Warwick and Cairns Business College, I also studied Governance and Local Government policy and procedures as a member of the Aurukun Shire Council in the early 1990's.

I work as a recognised Child Safety Services Carer, I have eight years experience as a Foster Carer, Kinship Carer and General Carer for the Department of Communities Child Safety Services. I am also a Board Member of the Aurukun Women's Shelter, a member of the Aurukun Justice Group and an Elder in the church. I have been a Local Commissioner for Aurukun since July 2008. I previously worked as a School Attendance Officer, community police officer, child and family service officer, as an English to Wik language translator for government departments, an employment consultant, bank cashier and consultant for the Family Income Management program.

I do a lot of work for my community, because it is the responsibility of the Elders in the community to provide for the next generation. When not working as a Local Commissioner, I do volunteer work in the community; we have to share our knowledge, our wisdom and our skills with the young people. I work alot with the young mothers, teaching mothercraft skills, general health and nutrition and healthy meal preparation. When I am not working for my community, I enjoy fishing, camping, shopping and a variety of arts and crafts, particularly making earrings.

The Commission –
Who makes up the Commission

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSIONER

Commissioner David Glasgow

David Glasgow is a qualified solicitor appointed to the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia and was appointed as a Magistrate in 1998, undertaking the circuit court in many of Queensland's Indigenous communities. Commissioner Glasgow is deeply committed to ensuring Indigenous people receive fair and natural justice in a way that is appropriate to their language and culture. The Commissioner was a seminal influence in the formation of the Murri Courts system and the Indigenous Justice Network of North Queensland, particularly in the Townsville region where he was Regional Coordinating Magistrate with responsibilities for the Children's Court, the Drug Court, the Murri Court and the Coroner's Court. In March 2008, he was appointed by the Premier, The Honourable Anna Bligh MP to work with the Indigenous Government Coordination Office within the Department of Premier and Cabinet to implement the Family Responsibilities Commission and was appointed to the role of Commissioner on 25 April 2008.

Aurukun Local Commissioners with Commissioner David Glasgow

LOCAL COMMISSIONERS

Aurukun

Commissioner Edgar KERINDUN (Sara Clan) was born in Aurukun and is a senior Indigenous coordinator with the Aurukun Aboriginal Shire Council and is currently employed by Queensland Health. Commissioner Kerindun was one of the original community police officers in Aurukun. He and partner Commissioner Doris Poonkamelya teach traditional skills and language and have a strong commitment to school attendance.

Commissioner Doris POONKAMELYA (Putch Clan) was born at Kendall River outstation and brought to Aurukun as a child. Commissioner Poonkamelya was a senior health care worker with Queensland Health for 29 years, a founding member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group and is deeply committed to education as the way forward for young people.

Commissioner Vera KOOMEETA (Aplach Clan) was born at Aurukun, is a Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) and a member of the Aurukun Community Justice Group. Commissioner Koomeeta's experience assists in her ability to make independent and just decisions as a Commissioner.

Commissioner Sarah WOLMBY (Aplach Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun and until recently worked as a Senior Health Care Worker. She is keen to see children going to the local school and then onto boarding school so that Aurukun has many Year 12 graduates. Commissioner Wolmby is currently working in the foundation of education at the Aurukun kindergarten.

Commissioner Ada Panawya WOOLLA (Wikmunkan Clan) was born and raised in Aurukun. Commissioner Woolla is a recognised Child Safety Carer, a Foster Carer and Kinship Carer for the Department of Communities Child Safety Services, a board member of the Aurukun Women's Shelter, a long serving member of Aurukun Justice Group and a respected church Elder.

The Commission –
Who makes up the Commission

Commissioner Dorothy POOTCHEMUNKA (Winchinam / Aplach Clan) was born, raised and educated in Aurukun and now has 10 children, 15 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren living in Aurukun. Commissioner Pootchemunka's interests span the full spectrum of traditional activities including fishing, camping and the customary female crafts of basket weaving using Pandanus and Cabbage Palm leaf.

Commissioner Douglas AHLERS (Wikmunkan Clan) was born on Thursday Island, grew up in Coen and moved to Aurukun when he married. He has three adult children and three grandchildren and works tirelessly to help his community in the areas of health, justice and local governance. Commissioner Ahlers currently holds advisory positions in the Health Action Group, the Wellbeing Centre Local Advisory Group and is on the board of Apunipima Health Council and the Cape York Land Council.

Coen

Commissioner Elaine Louise LIDDY (Lama Lama Clan) was born at Moojeeba (Port Stewart). Commissioner Liddy is a fluent Umpithimu language speaker and contributed to a dictionary of the Umpithimu language. Commissioner Liddy has previously been a teacher's aide, assistant teacher and Acting Director at the Coen State School.

Commissioner Peter Pedro PETER (Lama Lama Clan) is a respected Elder within the Lama Lama Clan and is currently the Chairperson of the Coen Community Justice Group. Commissioner Peter is regarded as an Elder of great significance within the community and was part of the people removed to Bamaga who have retained strong links to their homelands.

Commissioner Nora PRATT (Lama Lama / Ayapathu Clans) is a member of the Coen Community Justice Group, sits on the Murri Court and is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified). Commissioner Pratt previously worked for the Coen Health Clinic for 10 years as a health facilitator.

Commissioner Garry Lloyd PORT (Lama Lama/Kuku Yalanji Clans) is from a well respected Coen family and son of Barry Port, a famous Aboriginal tracker. Commissioner Port is deeply involved with the Lama Lama people. A qualified tradesperson he works with the local Coen School and forms an integral part of the school behaviour management strategy, providing mentoring to students and role modeling appropriate social behaviours.

Commissioner May Mary KEPPLE (Wikmunkan Clan) is a member of the Coen Community Justice Group, sits on the Murri Court, is a Justice of the Peace (Qualified). Commissioner Kepple enjoys painting on canvas and previously managed the Wunthulpu Visitor Centre in Coen. Commissioner Kepple recently completed an Assets Management course and now manages the Coen Business Centre and cares for her niece and nephew.

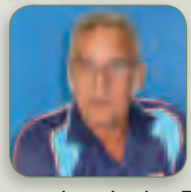
Commissioner Allan CREEK (Kaanju Clan) helps run a very successful program focusing on developing the skills of young people who have come before the criminal justice system. Commissioner Creek is also Chairperson of Kulla, a member of the Coen Justice Group, the Coen Welfare Reform Project Officer, and former Chairperson of the Cape York Land Council and Balkanu.

Coen Local Commissioner Allan Creek

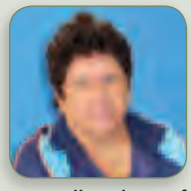
The Commission –
Who makes up the Commission

Hope Vale

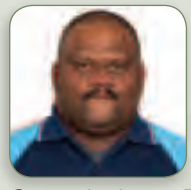
Commissioner Brian COBUS (Dingal / Muuli Clans) is an Executive Board Member and Project Officer for the Cape York Land Council, Chairman of Congress and an Executive Board Member of the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Unit (Cape York, Townsville, Mt Isa, Charter Towers). Commissioner Cobus is also a member of the Thurrbill Community Justice Group and Hope Vale Men's Group.



Commissioner Victor Patrick GIBSON (Balkan Clan) is currently employed with James Cook University researching family wellbeing and strengthening the Men's Group in Hope Vale and was previously the Deputy Chairperson of the Hope Vale Aboriginal Council. Commissioner Gibson is currently a member of the Thurrbill Community Justice Group, the Men's Group and organiser of the Young Leadership Forum encouraging young people to become the leaders of tomorrow.

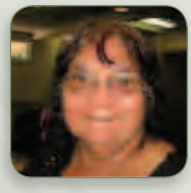


Commissioner Doreen HART (Binthi / Bulcan Clan) is currently employed by Cape York Partnerships as a Local Program Officer assisting the Government Coordinator with the coordination of services to the community. Prior to her current role she was the Housing Officer for the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council. Commissioner Hart is currently a member of the Thurrbill Community Justice Group and the Local Advisory Group.



Commissioner Harold BOWEN (Bulgan Warra Clan) is currently pursuing his dream of becoming a full-time artist after many years working in the mental health section of Queensland Health. Commissioner Bowen is also a licenced electrician and worked in his trade for 15 years prior to working in mental health. Commissioner Bowen's work in the arts includes hosting exhibitions in Hope Vale and providing artwork for exhibitions throughout Queensland.

Commissioner Irene HAMMETT (Ankamuthi / Bulgan Clan) is a fluent speaker of her native Guugu Yimithirr language and an acknowledged expert on the native flora and fauna of the Hope Vale region. Commissioner Hammett is a respected Elder in the Hope Vale community and a member of the Justice Group who chose teaching as her career, working with the children, their parents and extended families to improve the education system in the Hope Vale region.



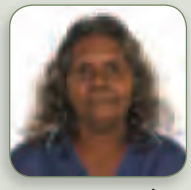
Commissioner Estelle Jean BOWEN (Kuku Taopan Clan) currently works in mental health and suicide prevention for Queensland Health continuing her work over the past 37 years in youth affairs, education and mental health.

Mossman Gorge

Commissioner Deborah BAMBOO (Kuku Yalanji Clan) is on the Mossman Elders Community Justice Group and has previously sat on the Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku (BBN) Board. Commissioner Bamboo has been involved in organising youth camps for the young people in Mossman Gorge. As a young Aboriginal person herself she has a particular focus on working with young people to build self esteem and social responsibility.

Commissioner Daniel FISCHER (Kuku Yalanji Clan) was born in Mossman. He enjoys rugby league, basketball, volleyball but especially cricket. Commissioner Fischer works as a chronic disease consultant for Apunipima, a cultural guide for the Mossman Gorge community and he also regularly conducts training sessions in multi media traditional knowledge recording.

The Commission –
Who makes up the Commission



Commissioner Berryl SHUAN (Kuku Yalanji Clan) was born in Mossman Town Hospital. She has 5 children and 14 grandchildren and enjoys painting. Commissioner Shuan has sold paintings to overseas buyers as well as displaying her paintings locally. Her focus with the Commission is to assist and improve the wellbeing of her family and community members in a place she loves and always will.

Commissioner Loretta SPRATT (Olkola Clan) was born on Thursday Island and has lived in Mossman Gorge for fifteen years, Loretta is currently employed by Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku (BBN). Commissioner Spratt has worked in the areas of Sport and Recreation, now works in horticulture and continues to work closely with the young people and women of her community.

Registrar Tammy Sovenyhazi

Commissioner Glasgow and the Local Commissioners are supported by the Registrar, Tammy Sovenyhazi. Prior to commencing with the Commission Tammy worked in all jurisdictions of the Magistrates Courts over a 12 year period. Her previous role was as Manager, Indigenous Justice Strategies within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. This department is the lead agent for the development and implementation of justice programs appropriate to the needs of Indigenous people including the whole-of-Government bail-based diversion program and the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program (QIADP).

As the Registrar of the Family Responsibilities Commission, Tammy manages the human resource, administrative, financial and logistic support of the Commission which is based in Cairns. Her role enables the Commissioner to exercise his powers effectively and for the Family Responsibilities Board to perform its advisory role to State and Commonwealth Ministers and the Commissioner regarding the operations of the Commission.

SUPPORT STAFF

Local Coordinators

A Local Coordinator has been appointed for each of the welfare reform communities and lives in that community. The function of the Local Coordinators is to support, at the local level, the efficient and effective operation of the Commission in the welfare reform community area for which the coordinator is appointed.

The Local Coordinators are:

Aurukun/Coen:	Ms Dellis Gledhill
Hope Vale:	Mr Michael Miller
Mossman Gorge:	Mrs Karen Gibson

The Cairns Registry

A central Registry office has been established in Cairns to support the administrative and logistical functions of the Commission through providing support to the Local Coordinators and Local Commissioners to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Commission. The Cairns Registry comprises:

- Registrar
- Executive Officer
- Principal Case Manager
- Registrar Support Officer
- Office Manager
- Information Officers
- Business Support Officers
- Executive Support Officer
- Administration Officer – Case Management Support
- Administration Officer – Corporate Support

"I was taught to respect everyone no matter what culture or colour, we are all different shades of the same one and this is what I will continue to teach as a Commissioner".

Coen Local Commissioner Elaine Liddy

Our Performance — Review of Operations

Operational Highlights

The past year has seen the work load of the Commission increase substantially due to greater acceptance within the community, improved communication and closer working relationships with agencies referring to the Commission. The highlights below summarise the activities of the Commission from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

Performance Statement

Family Responsibilities Commission	2008-2009 Actual Result	2009-2010 Target Estimate	2009-2010 Actual Result
Performance measures for 2009-10 have been developed in partnership with the Australian Government (FaHCSIA) and the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership.			
• Clients subject to agency notifications	715	900	833
• Total agency notifications received	2,791	2,000	4,364
• Child Safety and welfare notifications received	444	500	369
• School Attendance notifications received	744	700	1,353
• School Enrolment notifications received	0	50	0
• Housing notifications received	16	40	126
• Offence notifications received	1,587	900	2,516
• Conference notices issued	951	900	1,542
• Clients who are on Orders to attend Support Services	289	340	208
• Client service referrals	616	900	583
• Clients with Conference outcomes recommending no further action	233	300	501
• Clients subject to Conditional Income Management (CIM)	89*	90	232*

* Actual number of CIM orders in each discrete financial year.

- The level of respect for the 23 Local Commissioners continues to rise within their communities and with this respect comes an increased workload and added responsibilities for assisting community members.
- From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 the Commission received 4364 agency notifications, 2988 (68%) of which were within the Commission's jurisdiction
- Notifications increased 56% from 2791 in the year 2008 to 2009 to 4364 for the period 30 June 2009 to 1 July 2010, demonstrating the increased interaction and good working relationship developed with the agencies that refer clients to the Commission.
- The Commission held 1542 conferences in the 4 communities
- The Commission entered into 216 Family Responsibility Agreements and made 208 Family Responsibility Orders with case plans attached that required community members to attend a range of support services, or in some circumstances Conditional Income Management Orders.
- A total of 583 referrals were made to community service providers
- At 30 June 2010, 378 clients have case plans to attend service providers and are being monitored by the Commission

School Attendance Data	Term 2 2008	Term 2 2009	Term 2 2010
Aurukun	37.9%	63.2%	57.7%
Coen	96.8%	93.6%	92.2%
Hope Vale	87.6%	86.9%	83.5%
Mossman Gorge	60.9%	81.6%	79.1%

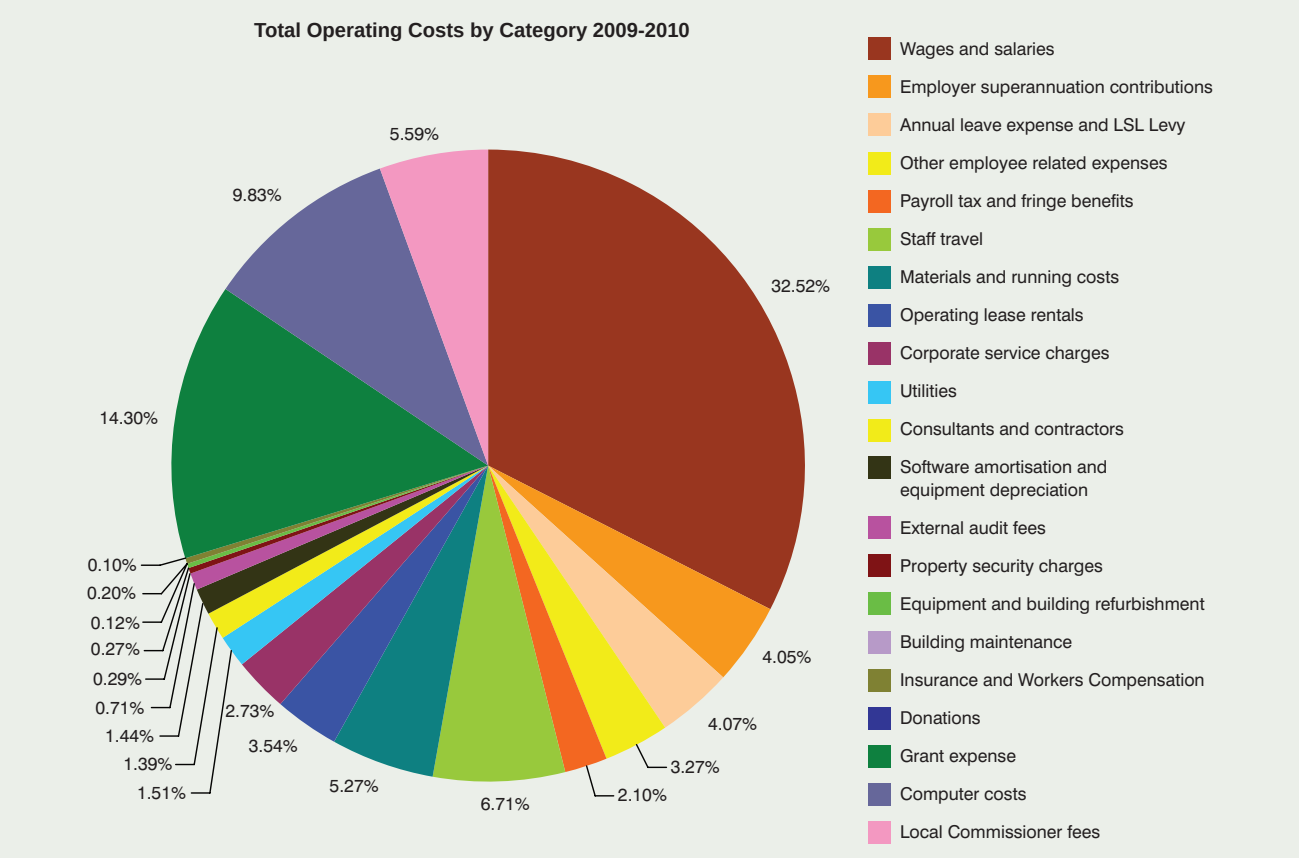
Throughout the past year school attendance has continued to improve each school term. Coen continues with its excellent attendance rates and remains above the Queensland average attendance rage of 91%. In Aurukun, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, whilst attendance rates have fluctuated there remains an obvious determination from all agencies to continue to work closely with parents and educators to ensure that the increases achieved continue and bring the schools closer to the Queensland average.

Financial Highlights

- Income for the year was $3.127 M. This includes Queensland Government funding of $3.022 M, and $0.101 M in bank interest received on the Commissions operating account and $0.004 M in other expense recoveries.
- A correction to the Commissions 2007-08 financial statements resulted in the Australian Government grant revenue of $3.5 M being fully recognised in the 2007-08 financial year that this grant was received.
- A correction to the Commissions 2008-09 accounts of $96,411 from the Queensland Government's Cape York Welfare Reform Service Procurement Fund was reallocated to grants income for the Principal Case Manager's position. The result is a corresponding increase in income and expenses relating to this position in the Commissions 2008-09 financial statements.

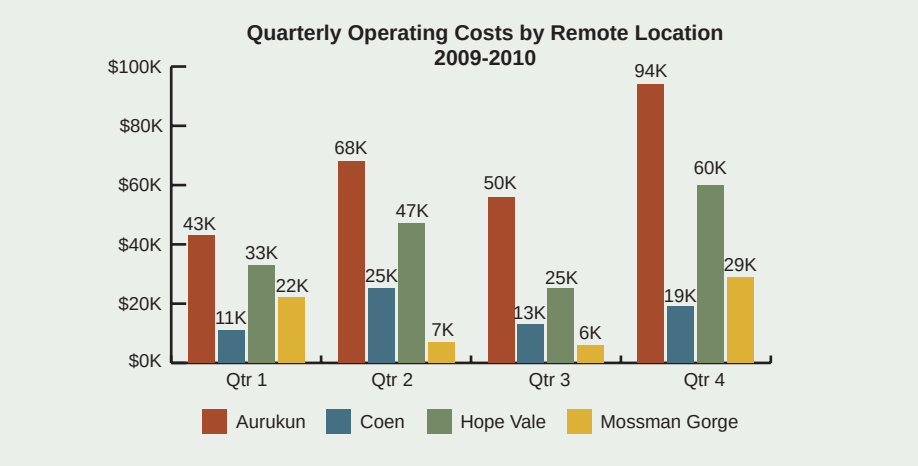
- Intangibles work in progress in the 2008-09 financial year included scoping expenses of $16,707. These expenses should not have been capitalised. The result of this error is an understatement of expenses and overstatement of the operating result of $16,707, and an overstatement of intangibles work in progress in 2008-09.
- Each of these errors have been corrected by restating each of the affected financial statement line items for prior years, as described above.
- Expenditure for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 was $4.099 M
- Estimated actual expenditure of $4.116 M was disclosed in the Commissions 2010-11 Service Delivery Statements for the 2009-10 financial year: however actual expenditure for the 2009-10 year was $4.099 M, this reflects less than anticipated expenditure on supplies and services and increased employee salaries and on-costs expenditure and higher depreciation allowances.
- The Commission has developed a multi relational client database during 2009-10 and relocated its Cairns Registry to larger office space in the same building. The completion of staff accommodation in Aurukun one of the Commissions remote operating locations has contributed to improved operations in Aurukun by providing for staff and visitor accommodation. The Commission has also secured a rental property to provide accommodation in Cooktown for staff working in the Hope Vale community.

The Commission's total operating costs in categories by percentage of total expenditure is shown in Graph 1 below:



Graph 1 Operating costs 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

Regional operational expenditure is categorised below by location per quarter. These figures exclude Local Coordinators' salary costs, which are incorporated in the Commission's global operating costs. The figures include sitting fees of $229,371 paid to Local Commissioners.

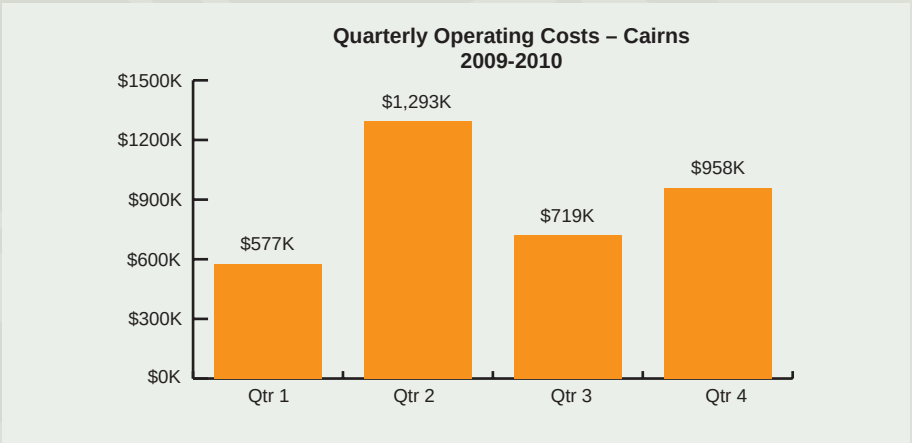


Graph 2: Operating costs by remote location 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

The increased costs for Aurukun, and Hope Vale in Quarter Two reflects increased utilisation of Local Commissioners by conferencing, and consultations with Government Ministers and Agencies and additional travel to conduct conferences in these communities.

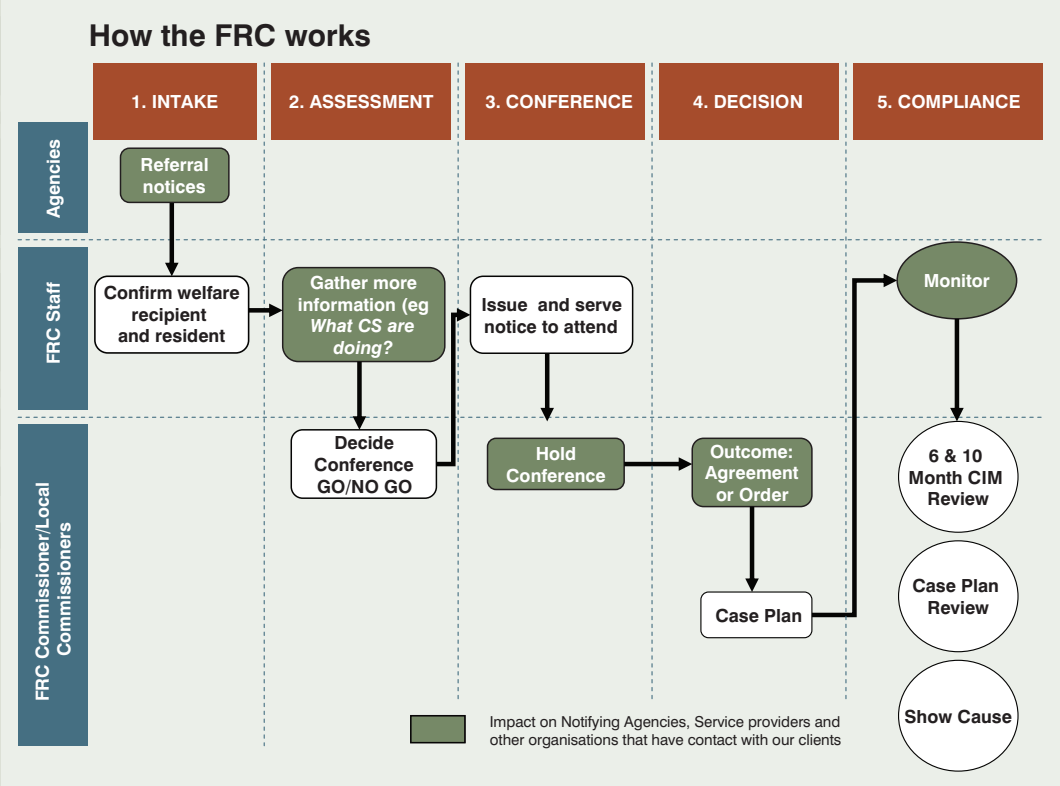
The higher operational costs for Aurukun and Hope Vale offices reflect the higher number of conferences held in these communities when compared to the number of conferences held in Coen and Mossman Gorge.

The Cairns office operational costs (below) in Quarter Two reflects the inclusion of the grant funding rolled over from 2008-09 for staff housing in Aurukun. The Quarter Four expenditure includes accrued Information Technology (IT) acquisitions associated with the development of the client database.



Graph 3: Quarterly operating costs, Cairns 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

How the Family Responsibilities Commission Works



The objectives of the Commission, as set out in the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act), is primarily to hold conferences with community members and accordingly to encourage clients, individuals and families to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour whilst promoting the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living in the community. The Commission can deal with a welfare recipient living in a Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) community from 1 July 2008 (a community member), if the person, or their partner, is in receipt of category R and P welfare payments*.

Intake and Assessment Phase

From 1 July 2008 any person, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, living in one of the four CYWR locations who is a welfare recipient and who is the subject of an agency notice is within the jurisdiction of the Commission.

A person is considered to be living in a CYWR community if, after 1 July 2008:

- the person's usual place of residence is in one of the four communities, or
- the person has lived in one of the four communities for at least three months.

The Act, passed in the Queensland Parliament on 13 March 2008, sets out the statutory obligations of the relevant Queensland departments to notify the Commission where a community member is not meeting pre-determined obligations.

**Category P welfare payment: social security benefit, social security pension, ABSTUDY.*
Category R welfare payment: age pension, carer payment, a service pension, income support supplement, Defence Force Income Support Allowance.

These are:

- The Department of Education and Training must submit a School Attendance Notice to the Commission if a child is absent for three full, or part, days of a school term without reasonable excuse, or where a child of compulsory school age is not enrolled to attend school.
- The Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) must submit a Child Safety Notification where the Chief Executive becomes aware of an allegation of harm or risk to a child.
- The Magistrates Court must submit a Court Offence Notice if a person is convicted of an offence.
- The Department of Communities (Housing and Homelessness Services), or the provider of public housing, must submit a Tenancy Breach Notice if they believe that the tenant has breached their public housing tenancy agreement.

The Commission receives agency notifications from the departments mentioned above. Once received, a process is followed which determines if the person is within the jurisdiction of the Commission. A large number of notices are received relating to people who reside outside of our jurisdiction, those notices are destroyed in accordance with the Act.

Upon determination of jurisdiction, each matter is referred to Local Commissioners of the relevant community so that a decision can be reached whether to order the person to attend a conference.

Conferences

The objective of the Commission, as set out in the Act, is primarily to hold conferences with community members and to encourage clients (individuals and families) to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour.

Having established jurisdiction, the Local Commissioners of the relevant community determine the conferencing priorities for the next sittings. Local Commissioners decide who will be conferenced based on the issues relating to the agency notification received and their knowledge of the individual or family subject of the notification. The Commission may decide not to act on a notice, or to prioritise certain notices above others. In accordance with a direction given by the Family Responsibilities Board at the 27 October 2008 board meeting, School Attendance matters are given priority. A priority list is developed between the local School Principal, School Attendance Case Manager (ACM) and the Local Coordinator. The Commission then prioritises notices where there are matters that relate to the wellbeing of children and other vulnerable people. All of this information is taken into account when developing the conference sitting schedule.

Clients are served with a “Notice to Attend Conference” by the Local Coordinator. The Local Coordinator explains, at the time of service, the purpose of the conference and the ramifications if the client fails to attend. The conferences are held in an informal setting with a panel of three Commissioners (including Commissioner Glasgow). The issues highlighted in the agency notification are discussed, as well as any other issues or concerns that the client or their family is encountering. Where the client’s first language is not English, the conference is held in the local language or dialect of the client. In Aurukun most conferences are held in Wik and the Local Commissioners translate for Commissioner Glasgow.

Our Performance — Review of operations

Local Commissioners continue to chair conferences, a process that was established in late 2008 and has continued successfully ever since. Local Commissioners have equal authority in the decision making process and their local knowledge of the individuals and families of their communities is pivotal to reaching successful agreements or decisions at each conference. Clients have advised that familiarity with the Local Commissioners makes attending a conference less intimidating and they are relieved to be in a position to explain the difficulties and challenges they are encountering.

Many matters that come before the Commission relate to intimate and difficult areas where people can feel ashamed, confused and deeply hurt. Commissioners provide guidance and advice about steps that people can take that accord with basic rights, tradition and custom. Many of the most powerful steps that people can take are personal decisions or actions that are not formally recorded in case plans. Sometimes Local Commissioners broker solutions between family members, government agencies and service providers that resolve difficult matters.

Within the conference, the client is encouraged to come to an agreement with the Commission to take a course of action appropriate to the issues that have led to their attendance before the Commissioners. The Commission steers clients to seek assistance, education and help from support services and government agencies and services. If the person is unwilling to agree on a course of action, the Commission may order a specific course of action to address the person's issues.

The Commission takes the unique circumstances of the person into account. At the conference, the Commission may:

- take no further action in relation to the notification
- reprimand the client
- recommend the client attend an appropriate community support service
- decide to enter into an agreement with the client to attend an appropriate community support service under a case plan
- direct the client to attend an appropriate community support service under a case plan for not more than 1 year
- give the Centrelink secretary a notice requiring that the client be subject to income management for at least 3 months but not more than 1 year.

Referrals are made to relevant community support services depending upon the individual needs of the client. For example, the client maybe referred to the School Attendance Case Managers (ACMs) to support, encourage and guide the parent/carer to ensure regular and committed school attendance. Clients that have appeared before the Commission may be referred to Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) to undertake the "Ending Offending" program or "Ending Family Violence" program. When an order is made that a client be subject to Conditional Income Management, the Commission seeks to stabilise family or client circumstances, particularly where children or other vulnerable people are concerned.

The Commission reschedules a conference if the client fails to attend the first conference. If the client fails to attend a second conference the Commissioners are able to make orders in their absence, which may include a Case Plan and/or a Conditional Income Management Order (CIM).

Case Management and Monitoring

Once a client has attended a conference and an agreement or order has been made, the relevant referrals are provided to the stated service providers. The service providers are required to submit monthly progress reports to the Principal Case Manager detailing the client's attendance, engagement and progress for the entire period of the agreement/order (usually twelve months).

The Principal Case Manager monitors a client's progress during this period. Where the client is not attending, engaging or progressing, recommendations are made to the Commissioners to institute Show Cause proceedings. To make recommendations the Principal Case Manager takes into account the information provided in the monthly progress reports as well as other information gathered at the local level and from associated agencies. To gather this information advice is sought from the Local Commissioners, Community Justice Groups, Child Safety Services, Attendance Case Management (ACM), Family Income Management (FIM) and Wellbeing Centre (WBC) and any other sources of information deemed appropriate under the Act.

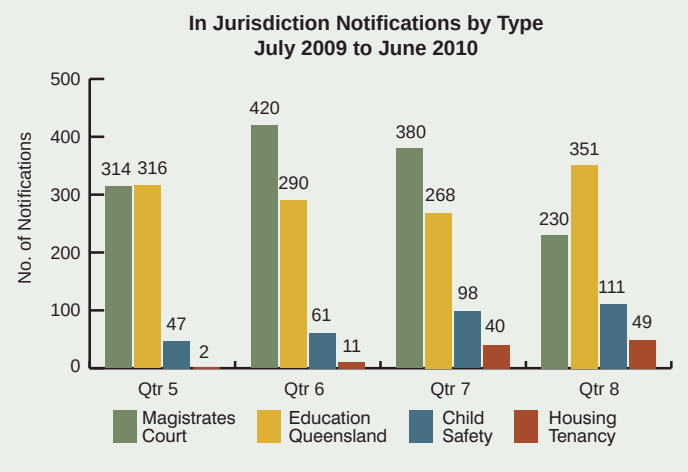
The Local Commissioners have identified the need to review clients that are on Conditional Income Management (CIM) orders at the six and ten month point. Commissioners work with clients to determine the best pathways for when their income management has ended including extending income management at a reduced rate. Clients are also conferenced and reviewed by the Commissioners when Show Cause proceedings are not appropriate.

Additionally, clients facing significant barriers such as addiction, cycles of violence and homelessness may lack the capacity to comply with all aspects of a case plan and these personal details may not be revealed in the first contact with the Commission. The Commission relies on the expertise of the service providers and agencies to meet the wider holistic needs of the clients and this has not always occurred. Although clients' cases are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are meeting obligations, significant resources are spent by the Commission investigating the quality of service and complexity of the client's needs.

Show Cause Proceedings

In accordance with *Section 82* of the Act, if the Commission reasonably believes a client has not complied with a requirement under a case plan to attend a community support service, Show Cause recommendations are made by the Principal Case Manager. The recommendation is then submitted to the Commissioners to assess the client in conference proceedings and determine what action, if any, will be taken to assist the client to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour. A range of options is available to the Commissioners including a new case plan, personal responsibility actions, Conditional Income Management or no further action. The client is given a minimum of 28 days notice prior to a show cause conference and strongly encouraged to fulfil the case plan requirements before the conference and /or provide any reasons why they have not complied with the case plan to assist the Commissioners to come to a fair and just decision. Show Cause investigations and conferences increasingly highlight the lack of services available, the reasonable accessibility to clients, and the low client engagement rates of service providers. Many service providers advise that the current low engagement rates are acceptable industry standards yet many clients report services are unavailable or service venues closed.

Notifications and Conferences by Community



Graph 4: Notifications in jurisdiction by type 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, the Commission received at total of 4364 agency notifications of which 2988 were in jurisdiction (as illustrated in Graph 4).

This comprises:

- 1344 Magistrates Courts notifications
- 1225 School Attendance notifications
- 317 Child Safety notifications
- 102 Housing Tenancy notifications

1376 notifications were not within jurisdiction. This comprises:

- 1172 Magistrates Courts notifications
- 128 School Attendance notifications
- 52 Child Safety notifications
- 24 Housing Tenancy notifications

1542 conferences were held in the period.

Aurukun

Aurukun accounted for 1753 notifications, 59% of the total notifications that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 753 Magistrate Courts notifications
- 826 School Attendance notifications
- 156 Child Safety notifications
- 18 Housing Tenancy notifications

210 Magistrate Courts notifications, 41 School Attendance notices, 29 Child Safety notifications and 1 Housing Tenancy notification were processed as not within jurisdiction.

855 conferences were held in Aurukun

Coen

Coen accounted for 205 notifications, 7% of the total notices that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 120 Magistrate Courts notifications
- 38 School Attendance notifications
- 41 Child Safety notifications
- 6 Housing Tenancy notifications

76 Magistrate Courts notifications, 20 School Attendance notifications, 3 Child Safety notifications and 1 Housing Tenancy notification were processed as not within jurisdiction.

107 conferences were held in Coen .

Hope Vale

Hope Vale accounted for 849 notifications, 28% of the total notifications that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 376 Magistrates Courts notifications
- 305 School Attendance notifications
- 99 Child Safety notifications
- 69 Housing Tenancy notifications

246 Magistrates Courts notifications, 66 School Attendance notifications, 18 Child Safety notifications and 22 Housing Tenancy notifications were processed as not within jurisdiction.

450 conferences were held in Hope Vale.

Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge accounts for 181 notifications, 6% of the total notifications that were in jurisdiction, comprising:

- 95 Magistrates Court notifications
- 56 School Attendance notifications
- 21 Child Safety notifications
- 9 Housing Tenancy notifications

640 Magistrates Courts notifications, 1 School Attendance notification and 2 Child Safety notifications were processed as not within jurisdiction.

130 conferences were held in Mossman Gorge.

Trends by Community

Aurukun

Aurukun accounted for the greatest percentage of notifications at 59%. This is reflected in the number of conferences held (855) which accounted for 55% of the Commission's conferencing workload. School Attendance notifications have risen significantly from 411 last financial year to 826 this year. This is attributed to a holistic, dedicated and persistent approach to improving education outcomes for Aurukun children within Education Queensland, Transition Support Services (TSS), School Attendance Case Management and the introduction of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA). The greater focus on the recording of non attendance and a small group of clients regularly receiving notifications regarding the same children not attending school contributed to the increase in notifications. Magistrates Court notifications have also increased from 378 last financial year to 753 this year, a number of factors have contributed to the rise. Queensland Police achieving full staffing levels, directly related to the completion of new accommodation and the subsequent drop in the work load of individual officers contributed significantly. This has allowed officers to increase their community liaison and the obtaining of relevant information from the community, to assist in the specific targeting of repeat offenders. As the Alcohol Management Plans (AMPs) reduce access to alcohol, public order offences are more common rather than the prior situation where matters often escalated to more serious and violent offences. Housing tenancy notifications have increased reflecting the commencement of leases with Queensland Housing in Aurukun in October 2009.

Coen

In Coen, Magistrate Court notifications accounted for 58% of notifications received in the year. Queensland Police have advised that increased information flow and community willingness to establish safe and responsible environments for children has resulted in Police being better positioned to respond and take action preventing the escalation of offences. Police report in both Coen and Aurukun the ability to be pro-active has assisted in the greater normalisation of community relationships and the early intervention in offending behaviour. The social and cultural commitment to schooling despite, a number of changes and adjustments, remains strong with attendance notifications only accounting for 19% of notifications.

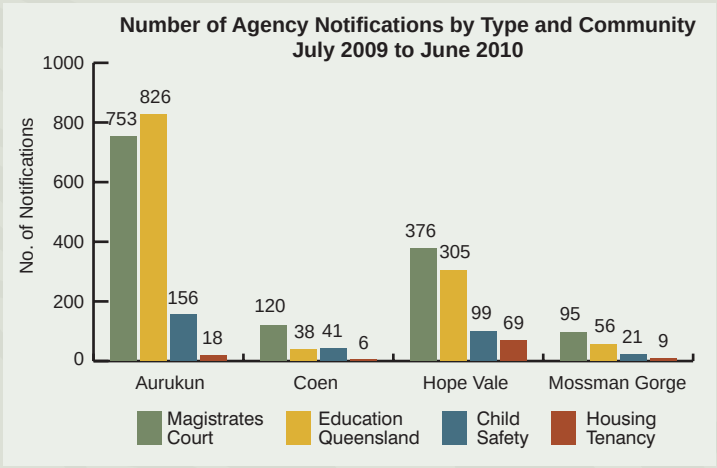
Hope Vale

The introduction of the Community Housing Rent Policy for Indigenous Communities altered the amount of rent required for each household. This resulted in a significant rise in the number of Housing Tenancy notifications due to arrears from four last year to 69 this year. To allow for households to adjust to the changes in rent charged the Commissioners have placed most of these notifications on monitor (yet to be conferenced) pending a decision. School attendance notifications have risen from the previous year from 207 to 305 this year, reflecting greater reporting consistency from both the Hope Vale Primary School and Cooktown High School and a small number of chronically truant youths. Although Child Safety notifications have decreased from 109 last year to 99 this year, Child Safety Services report that Child Safety matters in Hope Vale remain serious in nature and require extensive resourcing and assistance to families.

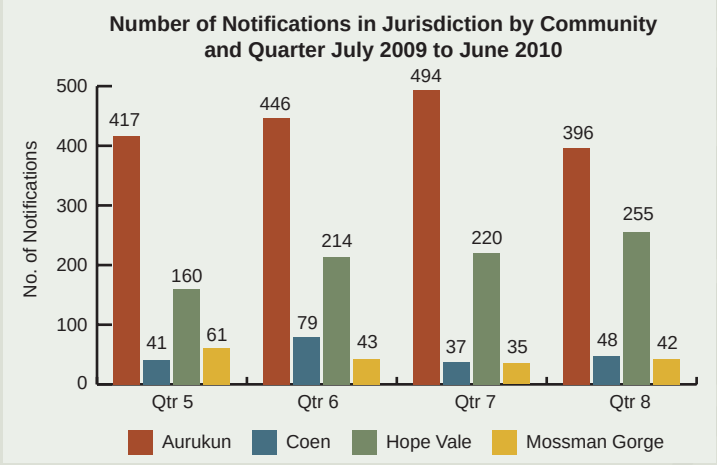
Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge Magistrates Court notifications accounted for 52% of notifications and trend towards public nuisance and low level offences relating to alcohol misuse reflecting the ease of access to liquor. The excessive number of Magistrates Court notifications (640) not within jurisdiction is attributed to the Magistrates Courts not being able to distinguish between Mossman township residents and Mossman Gorge residents due to technical restrictions. The increase in school attendance notifications from 20 last year to 56 for this year relate to a small number of large families with repeat notifications being registered for each child absent on each day. This increase can also be attributed to families relocating their children from other communities to be cared for by family members in Mossman Gorge due to behavioural issues. The behavioural issues (including truancy) of these children therefore are reflected in the increase in school attendance notifications for Mossman Gorge

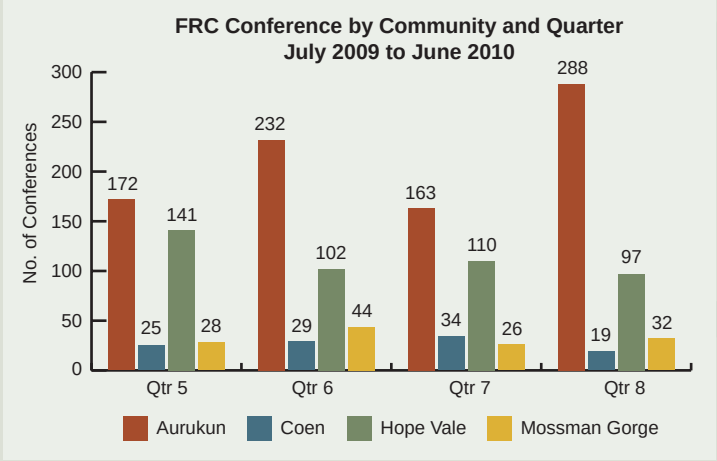
Our Performance — Review of operations



Graph 5: Notifications in jurisdiction by type and community 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.



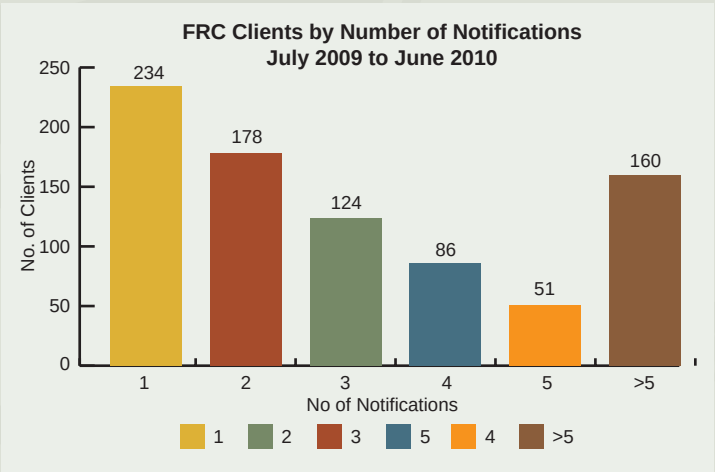
Graph 6: Notifications in jurisdiction by community and quarter 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.



Graph 7: Conference by community and quarter 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, nineteen percent of the Commission's clients received more than five notifications. In many instances this illustrates multiple school absences or multiple Magistrates Court notices relating to one incident. In its second year of operation, the Commission encountered clients with complex issues and recurring problems that bring them to the Commission's attention on a regular basis. The return of clients to conference, multiple notifications and lack of engagement with service providers is reflected in the rate of clients placed on Conditional Income Management orders, rising from 89 last year to 232 this year. The Commissioners report they are now dealing regularly with the individuals and families that have long been considered problematic and at times dysfunctional, whose behaviour impacts on the entire community. The Commissioners also report there are individuals and families who appear only once before the Commissioners, take on board personal responsibility and/or case plan referrals, and do not receive further notifications.

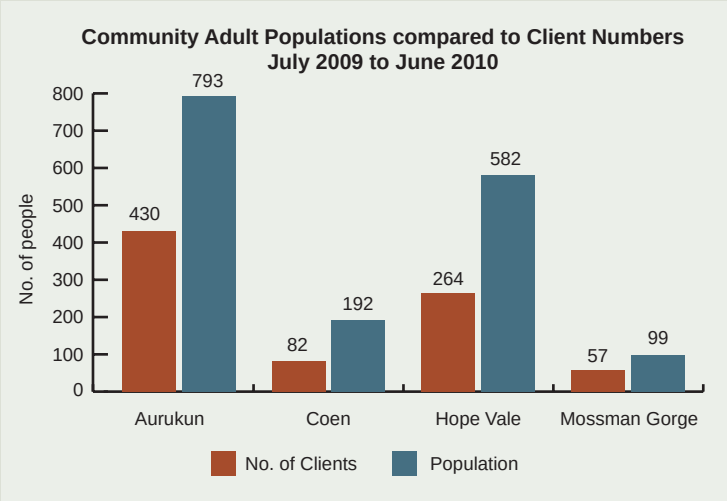
Aurukun conference numbers of 855 for the year continue to reflect the amount of notifications (59%) received by the Commission pertaining to Aurukun, and the number of sitting days required to deal with these matters. These figures are directly related to the larger population of Aurukun as a percentage of population in the CYWR program and the continued effort by the Commission to respond to non attendance at school.



Graph 8: Clients by number of notifications 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

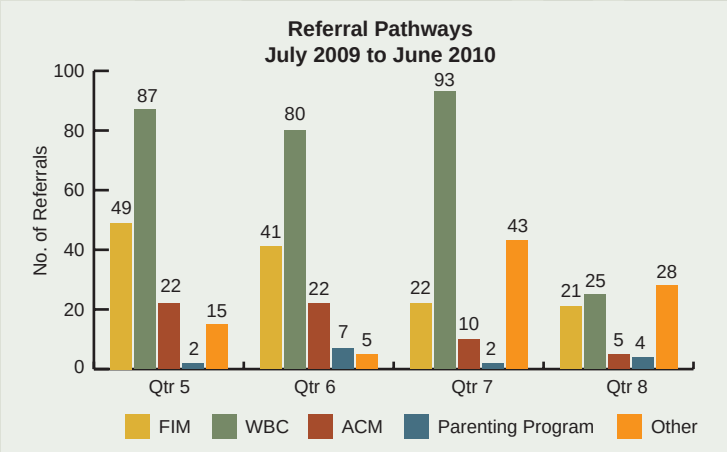
Note: *Where multiple notifications are received each notification is counted individually and each child's absence is counted individually. For example, if three children from one family were absent on one day that is counted as three individual notifications.*

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 the Commission identified 50% of the adult population (17 and over) in the four communities as FRC clients. Mossman Gorge remains the highest client percentage at 58% a drop from 67% last year.



Graph 9: Number of clients who have received notifications in relation to population from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

Note: *Number of clients who have received notifications up until 30 June 2010 in comparison to population figures of adults (17 years and over) provided from ABS preliminary 30 June 2009 ERP Figures. These figures include clients who have received more than one notification.*



Graph 10: Referral Pathways July 2009 to 30 June 2010

Note 1: *Other referral pathways include Probation and Parole, Ending Family Violence Program, ATODS, Health Clinic and Job Services*

Note 2: *The Commission responded to notification from the Royal Flying Doctor Service, interim auspice agent for the Wellbeing Centres (WBCs), advising of resource constraints and decreased case plan referrals to the WBCs in quarter eight accordingly.*

Case Management

As at 30 June 2010, 496 clients were being case managed. The availability and quality of services in the welfare reform communities remains inconsistent, lacking in resources and capability. The Commission's primary referral agencies, the Wellbeing Centres (WBC), Attendance Case Management (ACM) and Family Income Management (FIM) continue to vary in functionality and delivery, but ACM has shown considerable improvement recently. The retention and enticing of staff to live in the communities which they service, remains a challenge for the service providers and the high staff turnover impacts adversely on client engagement rates and client outcomes.

The lack of core processes, secondary referrals, timely Monthly Progress Reports and comprehensive client files by service providers also continues to hamper the delivery of on the ground services and effective client management by the Commission. The lack of program definition and direction has also limited client engagement and the confidence of the Local Commissioners in the service providers. The situation is compounded by frequent reports from community members to the Commission of closed offices and inappropriate and /or unavailable service provision staff. This limits client engagement and progress.

To counter the limitations of service providers, the Commission has sought alternatives, recently engaging the Department of Community Safety, Corrective Services to conduct three day Ending Family Violence courses in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge on a regular basis. The Commission eagerly awaits the availability of other service referral possibilities such as the Parenting Program in Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge, gambling and tobacco reduction programs in all the communities and the opening of the Child Safe House and Women's Shelter in Aurukun. The Commission has also recently engaged two Business Support Officers to assist with the intensive case management of high risk clients and clients with complex needs in the coming year.

Local Commissioners- voices of their communities

Increasingly the views and opinions of the Local Commissioners are being sought on a wide range of matters concerning their respective communities. In May 2010 Aurukun Commissioners Koomeeta, Woolla, Kerindun and Poonkamelya attended a meeting held at Aurukun with the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Managing Directors (MDs) of several major Australian companies who are part of the Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships on their visit to the Cape York district. The visit was arranged and also attended by Noel Pearson, Director of the Cape York Institute. The Hope Vale Local Commissioners also met with the visitors informally at an evening BBQ held at the home of Commissioner Irene Hammett when the group visited the Hope Vale community.

The fact finding group included Glen Boreham, MD of IBM Australia; Geoff Wilson, CEO of KPMG; Leigh Clifford, Chairman of Qantas; Brett Riley, MD of Telstra Country Wide; Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA); and Gerhardt Pearson Executive Director of Balkanu.

During the Aurukun meeting Commissioner Koomeeta gave a short presentation introducing the different clan groups, spoke of the work and community experience of the Local Commissioners and also explained the steps involved in becoming a Local Commissioner.

Commissioner Woolla then spoke at length on how the Commission works, how the Local Commissioners are received within the community, and the process leading up to conferences. She also explained how the conferences are often conducted in the local language, some of the outcomes of the conferences and how this involves the service providers. Commissioner Woolla spoke about the good working relationship with the Department of Communities Child Safety Services and the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services).

Commissioner Poonkamelya then described how she volunteers on a daily basis attending school and working with the teachers to supervise the behaviour of some unruly teenage boys. The Commissioners then collectively spoke about the community and how people now have a better understanding of the Commission's process. A question was asked in regard to whether it was mandatory for clients to attend as the client attendance rate was so high. The Commissioners advised that whilst it was compulsory, most people now saw the value of receiving assistance and attended of their own accord. "Community people are now more aware that the Commission is in a position to help community members obtain whatever assistance they may need" replied Commissioner Woolla.

A question was asked as to why the Commissioners believed that the process was working. Commissioner Koomeeta replied that she believed it was because the process was run at a community level. The Local Commissioners were making decisions based on the information presented at conference but also with first hand knowledge of what was happening in the community. The Commissioners were in a position to be able to give assistance as needed and the clients knew that what was said in conference is held in the strictest confidence.

The Commissioners also acknowledged Commissioner Glasgow's role in the process and went on to say that when Commissioners Glasgow says he is going to do something the clients and Local Commissioners know that it will be done. This in itself has developed a lot of trust in the Commission and the Local Commissioners.

The visitors personally thanked each of the Commissioners and had a brief conversation with each of them acknowledging their positive attitude and dedication to their positions.

Conditional Income Management and Variation to Orders

Under the Act, a conference decision may include the issue of a Conditional Income Management (CIM) notice to Centrelink. The Commission only applies Income Management after an agency notification is given in relation to the person and after the Commission has attempted to, or held, conferences with the affected persons. The Commission then only issues a CIM Notice after considering the individual circumstances and whether it is more appropriate to take alternative action. CIM orders are made for a variety of reasons. Primarily CIM orders are issued to facilitate early intervention and to assist the person to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour. These reasons include stabilising a person's circumstances, particularly where children or other vulnerable people are concerned. CIM orders are also made where the client fails to attend two scheduled conferences, or is not complying with case plan requirements, and/or continuing to receive additional notifications.

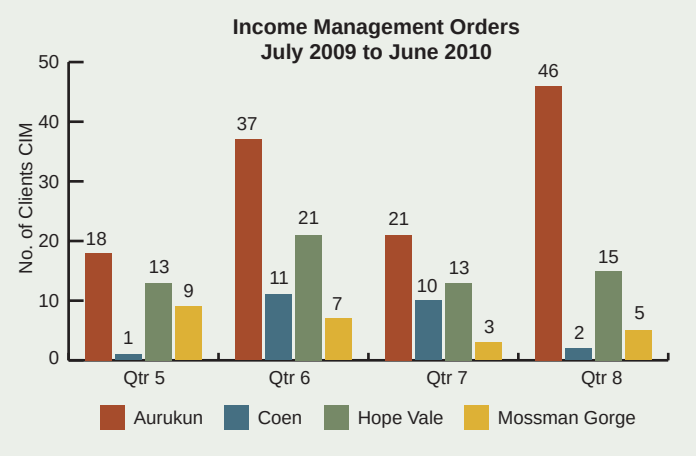
If income management is recommended, it is for a stated period up to 12 months. The Commission also determines the proportion of payments to be income managed, either 75% or 60% of fortnightly welfare payments.

Centrelink enacts the order and meets with the client to discuss their budget and financial obligations. Centrelink allocates payments to ongoing expenses, such as rent and bills, and allocates the remainder of funds to a BasicsCard for purchase of food and other consumables. The client receives the remaining funds of 25% or 40% into their bank account.

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, 232 CIM notices were issued. Commissioners report that the majority of notices were due to the continued and persistent non-compliance of clients, the receipt of repeat and multiple notifications, not addressing case plan requirements or not attending re-scheduled conferences. Commissioners have emphasised that a portion of clients request CIM and the BasicsCards but do not wish it to be recorded as voluntary due to home situations and financial pressures from family. This is especially the case for women in violent relationships. Commissioners also report that a large percentage of clients were initially reluctant to accept the BasicsCard. These clients found over time that the BasicsCard provided many benefits to their family including ensuring that food was always available and they were able to save for household items.

Although not originally envisaged in the functions of the Commission, the Commissioners have now initiated a review process at six and ten months for those clients on CIM. The client is conferenced to discuss case plan requirements, new notifications and money management plans for when the CIM period ends. The Commissioners also encourage the client to work closely with Family Income Management (FIM) in anticipation of the expiration of the BasicsCard.

Corresponding with increased CIM orders, the submission of Applications to Amend or End Agreement or Order have increased proportionally from 20 in 2008-09 to 63 in 2009-10. The Commissioners consider a number of options when determining the outcome of applications, including varying case plans, amending the CIM percentage or ceasing a FRA. The Commission requests that clients provide information that illustrates changes to their circumstances or increase in standards of behaviour including a FIM budget for when the CIM ceases plus attendance with service providers on a consistent basis.



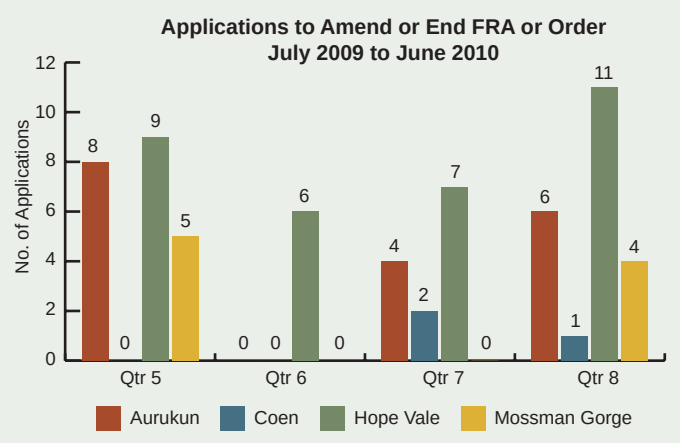
Graph 11: Conditional Income Management 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

"The FRC in Mossman Gorge, is like giving people in our community a steering wheel to control their lives"
Mossman Gorge Local Commissioner Danny Fischer

Our Performance — Review of operations

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 a total of 63 Applications to Amend or End a Family Responsibilities Agreement or Order were received. The applications resulted in:

- 20 Applications to Amend or End granted and Income Management orders were revoked
- 13 Applications were no further action as clients did not attend the conference
- 11 Applications to Amend or End were dismissed
- 7 Applications were adjourned to provide the client time to comply with Case Plan requirements
- 2 Clients were not conferenced as previous applications received within 3 months
- 2 Applications were adjourned and the client placed on a new Case Plan
- 2 Applications were extended to a further 12 months at 75%
- 1 Income Management order was reduced from 75% to 60%
- 5 Applications received are scheduled for July 2010.



Graph 12: Applications to Amend or End FRA or Order 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

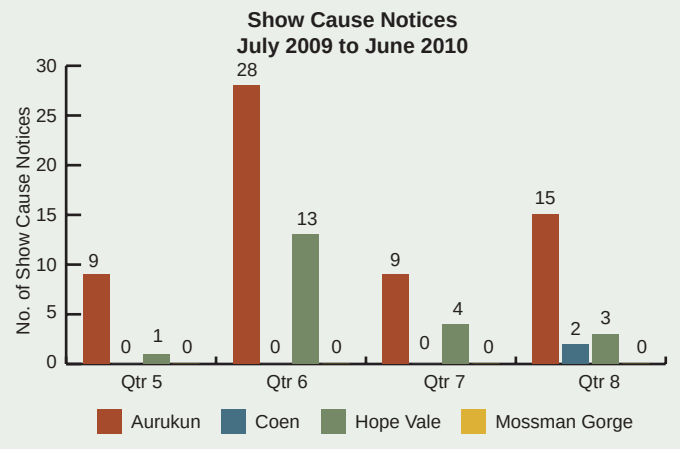
Show Cause Notices

The Commission continues to be limited and restricted in its ability to issue Show Cause notices to clients, as service providers are unable to provide appropriate services to clients or report adequately regarding client attendance, engagement and progress. This information is required to make fair and just determinations. Many clients are not engaged or only engaged on a bi-monthly basis by service providers due to resource, procedure and capacity issues. The Commission will continue to work with service providers and their funding bodies to improve appropriate service provision to the four communities by highlighting gaps, reporting difficulties and advising capacity issues. Many of the clients are attending conferences more times than they are attending service providers. A number of clients are also being exited from service providers without consultation with the Commission only to receive further notifications and appear before the Commissioners again. The premature exiting of clients or exiting of clients by service providers without consultation with the Commission, significantly impacts on the ability of the Commission to commence Show Cause investigations.

The Commission, at the request of service providers, has instigated less resource intensive reporting systems to allow the service providers greater time and increased flexibility to engage clients. The Commissioners have also taken an active role in escorting clients to service providers, mostly in their own time.

From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, 84 Show Cause hearings have been completed.
These matters resulted in:

- 30 Clients received CIM orders (75% for 12 months) due to failure to attend
- 20 No further action
- 18 Adjourned and scheduled for the future, to allow further time to comply with FRA Case Plans
- 9 Clients on new orders or FRA Case Plans
- 7 Scheduled for July 2010-08-03



Graph 13: Show Cause Notices 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

Client Case Study

The Local Commissioners experience the devastating effects of alcohol misuse, marijuana and chroming throughout their family, community and workplaces every day. They know there is no short term solution to addiction and the violence, neglect and poverty which are all intrinsically linked to the misuse and abuse of substances. But what the Commissioners also see are the efforts and small steps, the improvements that individuals and families are making through their own efforts with support from the community and by working with the Commission. Much of this success is due to the willingness of the Local Commissioners to support and encourage community members in their efforts long after the conference doors have closed and the sitting has finished.

Recently an older man attended conference. He had come to the attention of the Commission due to a Magistrates Court notification for bringing liquor into a restricted area. The Commissioners in agreement with the man placed him on a case plan to the Wellbeing Centre to complete the substance abuse program and the Family Income Management (FIM) program to develop a budget and savings plan. He was recalled to the Commission several months later for another Magistrates Court notification for bringing liquor into the same restricted area.

The man reported that this was an old charge which had been delayed, he admitted it had happened, but it had happened prior to him coming before the Commission previously and before he gave up drinking. Since his first time before the Commission, the man had been thinking about his drinking, why he kept drinking and the damage he was causing to himself, his family and his community, and he had decided to stop. He had not had a drink for the past five months and although he was finding it hard at times he was determined to stay on track. He was going to the Wellbeing Centre to talk about things, but very quietly, not telling many people about what he was doing because he did not want everyone to know about his problem. FIM was helping him look after the extra money he had now that he was no longer spending it on grog. He had even started to look into working with Pride of Place and was saving to get a gazebo in his front yard.

Local Commissioners Loretta Spratt, Berryl Shuan and Daniel Fischer attending a Mental Health First Aid course in Cairns, to learn about addictive behaviour and ways of assisting clients with addictions.

The Commissioners took no action in regard to the notification, congratulated the man on his efforts over the last six months, and will continue to quietly support him, especially around his family who all drink and often tempt the man to go back to the grog. The Commissioners know the chances of him going back to the grog over the long term are high but they also see the determination in the man's face. He is healthier, happier and calmer since he gave up drinking. They will be there to support him for the long haul.

Local Commissioner Profile

Profile

Profile: Coen Commissioner Elaine Liddy

My name is Elaine Louise Liddy I am a member of the Lamalama people with strong cultural and traditional knowledge passed down from my father and grandfather, I am also a proud Commissioner. As the youngest of three sisters and one brother I was brought up to believe in the benefits of education and working hard. Although my mother passed away in my teenage years and later my father, my extended family have always supported and encouraged my siblings and myself in our efforts to establish a good life for ourselves and our families. With my family and Elders we always visited our traditional country of Port Stewart, fishing and hunting on the land, learning about our past and our culture.

Coen Local Commissioners Liddy and Pratt at Silverplains outstation

As a young woman I remember the great joy my family and I felt when our traditional lands were returned to us. With the guidance of my Elders, I have worked with the State Government and landowners for the return of traditional lands and the development of lease arrangements to assist the landowners. Port Stewart (Theethinji) was handed back to the Lamalama people in 1992, Silver Plains (Moojeeba) in 2000 and more recently Running Creek and Lillyvale Stations were returned to their traditional owners in 2008. I now take my children and my nieces and nephews to our traditional country and explain the importance of respect for the land, preserving the land for the future and connecting with our relatives past and present.

I completed my junior schooling in Coen and then left for boarding school as a teenager just as the Coen kids do today. After completing years 8-10 at Herberton High, I attended Atherton High to complete my senior certificate. I then started an Early Childhood Diploma at TAFE in Cairns, but I was very lonely. When a job as an assistant teacher at the kindergarten came up, I returned to Coen. I have always loved working with the children to see them learn and get excited when that 'light bulb" of understanding happens. When a vacancy came up at the local primary school for a Teacher's Aide I applied and I then worked hard at the school for 10 years.

By 2001 I was keen to learn again and completed a multimedia computer course. I then started working with the Elders and historians of Coen to record the history of the region. Together we compiled a multimedia catalogue of the history of Coen including the history of the Aboriginal clans who lived in the area of Coen Township. I also worked with the Elders and community members to compile a dictionary of the Umpithamu language. I now work as a CDEP Team Leader for Indigenous Job Connections in Coen. It has taken dedication and hard work at school and study in the workforce to get this far, but I really enjoy working with all the people of Coen to develop jobs and pathways to emplyment and learning opportunities such as the

Local Commissioner Profile

Working on Country program with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

As well as working for Job Connections, I am a member of the Health Action Team, the Welfare Reform Local Advisory Group, a governing committee board member for Apunipima Cape York Health Council Executive and a cultural coordinator for the Lamalama people. When I heard about the Family Responsibilities Commission, I decided that I wanted to be a Commissioner because it stood for what I believed in. The F is for families, this is what is most important to all people we are nothing without strong families. The R for responsibilities, is what should drive us in life, to care for and be responsible for our families. The C for Commission, stands for the Lore (law), the Lore is what guides us to do the right thing. As a Commissioner I have seen changes, some small and some slow but both individuals and families are changing, becoming stronger and more responsible.

Commissioner Glasgow and Local Commissioner Liddy at Silverplains

In Coen, we have always valued education for our children. In the old days our ancestors and our aunts and uncles were our teachers, but today we need a school education as well. Our parents and grandparents did not have the school education or opportunities we have today. As a Commissioner it is important that I work hard to encourage parents to give

Coen Local Commissioners Creek, Port, Keepple and Pratt in conference

their children a better life with both a school and culture balanced education. I was taught to respect everyone no matter what culture or colour, as we are all different shades of the same one and this is what I will continue to teach as a Commissioner.

I do not have a lot of spare time, but when I do, I go out to my traditional country with my family, taking my nieces and nephews we fish, hunt and tell stories, just like we used to do when I was a child with my Elders. I show them the sacred sites and how to be respectful of the land and the spirits. I have been fortunate to travel to many places with the work I am doing, I enjoy meeting new people and experiencing new places especially learning other cultures and traditions, but I am always most happy when I come home to my country.

Challenges and Outlook

Challenges

Community Expectations

The Commission began operating on 1 July 2008, with enthusiastic support from many local residents and grass roots organisations such as the local justice groups. The Commission encountered some initial resistance when conferences began, with many community members requesting further consultation and information regarding the implementation of the Commission and its scope of operations. Much of the work to explain the workings and objectives of the Commission fell to the Local Commissioners in each community. The Local Commissioners took up the challenge and worked tirelessly throughout the past year to inform and educate all sectors of the community about how the Commission works and their role within the Commission.

Many members of the community have found the changes to be a difficult and ongoing challenge, but community acceptance of the Commission is growing with every conference sitting. Acceptance has been enhanced by the manner in which the Local Commissioners deal with the problems of community members, how they conduct themselves in conferences and how they conduct themselves in the general community. In addition to how they represent their communities, has continually demonstrated to community members that it is not the job of the Commission to sit in judgement but to work collaboratively with individuals and families to find solutions to the issues confronting community members.

The Commission Working with the Community

The Local Commissioners continue to develop as important authority figures in their respective communities. Their ability to make decisions affecting the direction of their fellow community members, to bring about changes to their lives, is critical to the success of the Commission. The Local Commissioners continue to receive recognition for their efforts by regularly being called upon to give advice to government and non-government agencies, as detailed in other sections of this report.

The Commission has continued to develop and deliver a comprehensive training program for the Local Commissioners that will see them gain qualifications and skills in areas such as Justice of the Peace (both Qualified and Magistrates Court) and mediation. The training and skill development of Local Commissioners will continue throughout the life of the Commission.

School attendance statistics for Aurukun and Mossman Gorge continue to be encouraging, with both Coen and Hope Vale remaining relatively stable at their already high rates of attendance. The continued improvements are a credit to the dedicated staff of the Department of Education and Training and the Attendance Case Managers. The Commission continues to acknowledge their efforts, particularly in light of the implementation of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy in Aurukun and Coen in Term 1, 2010. It is always difficult for children, parents and staff to cope with and manage significant change, but it is a credit to all involved to manage such a significant change and maintain or increase school attendance in a changing environment.

Challenges and Outlook

Provision of Services within Communities

In its second year of operation the Commission continues to focus on consolidating administrative procedures that support the operations of the Commission's conferencing processes. Further to this, a more comprehensive and streamlined case management model is in the development phase with deployment anticipated in July – August 2010.

The capacity of the Commission to conduct early interventions or to source appropriate solutions to complex situations has been adversely affected by the lack of suitable service provision in all of the communities.

To counter the limitations of service providers, the Commission has sought alternatives, recently receiving funding to engage the Department of Community Safety, Queensland Corrective Services to conduct three day Ending Family Violence courses in each community on a regular basis. The Commission is also awaiting the commencement of other service provider options, the Parenting Program in Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and gambling and tobacco reduction programs in all four communities. In addition, it is anticipated that the Safe House for Children and the Women's Shelter will open in the near future in Aurukun. The Commission has also recently engaged two Business Support Officers to assist the Principal Case Manager with the intensive case management of high risk clients and clients with complex needs in the coming year.

The Commission is in constant dialogue the Cape York Welfare Reform Program Office. The Welfare Reform Project Board and other relevant government agencies and non-government organisations. In an effort to broaden the range of services available to clients and to enhance the depth and breadth of case management provided for individuals and families.

Compliance with Agreements and Decisions

The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* provides for a Show Cause procedure which is invoked in instances where a community member has not, without valid reason and/or within a reasonable time frame, complied with the terms of an agreement or decision of the Commission. The difficulty experienced by some clients in accessing suitable services has hampered the Commission's ability to meet its statutory obligations to properly assess a client's willingness to comply with their case plans. This has led to less Show Cause proceedings than expected, as the Commission must always give the client the benefit of the doubt and act in a fair and just manner to assist the client.

Administrative Challenges

All organisations working in remote locations have similar logistical and administrative challenges. Soon after commencing operations the Commission adopted a strategy of establishing close working relationships with organisations facing similar environmental and logistical difficulties so that collaborative solutions could be achieved. In the past year there have been many significant challenges, but largely due to the forward contingency planning of the Executive Management Team, the operations of the Commission have not been significantly impeded by any of these events.

Challenges and Outlook

The Commission has also adopted a continual improvement process in all aspects of operational management, to achieve best practice and to create flexible, dynamic and more responsive processes. Our strategies comprise operational and procedural reviews, which includes liaising with notifying agencies and service providers, to refine reporting frameworks aimed at rapid delivery.

Some of these initiatives include:

- The creation of documents in a structure more compatible with the Commission's Information Technology (IT) systems such as spreadsheets and data dumps
- Review of the Commission's forms and conference documents to reflect the needs of the Commission and clients whilst ensuring compliance with the Act
- Updates of internal IT system and processes to improve efficiencies such as an Agency Notification Inbox
- Collaborating with Centrelink to ensure the United Government Gateway (UGG) system fulfils the requirements of the Commission whilst also remaining compatible with other user/client needs
- Allocation of human resources to meet short term peak demands. This has necessitated the recruitment of temporary staff, re-allocation of tasks, and job analysis and redesignation in the interests of administrative and operational efficiency
- Working with service providers to align data compatibility and reporting frameworks for consistency and to avoid duplication
- Development and implementation of a new client relationship management database more compatible to the Commission's requirements
- Increased interaction between the Commission and Government departments, which facilitate early intervention such as working with parolees immediately upon release and quicker response to situations due to improved communication.

The Commission has also adopted a workplace culture of internal audit and continuous improvement wherein operational reviews are systematically performed. The outcome of these reviews identifies opportunities to streamline processes. Where opportunities are identified, the Commission undertakes the development of practical solutions based on the relevant need. Recent review processes undertaken include:

- A review of the Commission's Procedures Manual was carried out in the first half of 2010 to ensure our operations correctly reflect the needs of the Commission, its ability to cope with procedural change, compliance with legislative requirements (and accompanying manuals) and to safeguard business continuity
- The Commission worked with the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) to draft operational guidelines, which allow both departments to function more effectively
- Revising the Magistrates Courts notifications spreadsheet to reduce the complexity of data, removal of irrelevant data, and the provision of additional information
- Developing and implementing the Intensive Case Management framework for high risk and complex needs clients
- Compilation of a comprehensive Code of Conduct to guide the Commission's employees until the Queensland Government releases the single Code of Conduct for all Government Departments in late 2010.

Changes of Key Staff in Community

Changes in key staff comprising school principals, police (both officer in charge and duty officers), Health Clinic and Wellbeing Centre staff in each community have a considerable impact on the Commission. Due to the changes, there is a continual loss of corporate and operational knowledge regarding the Commission's mandate and working relationship with the relevant agency. This loss of corporate knowledge can and does, for a period of time, translate into a lack of, or reduction in:

- communication
- cooperation
- community engagement
- inconsistent and/or significantly reduced service delivery

When community members, and especially Commission clients, lose key service personnel whom they have learnt to trust, they must establish new working relationships with the replacement personnel. Some clients become disengaged or disheartened in the process of re-establishing relationships, and do not wish to attend services. Such changes, particularly if they are frequent, place the community in a continuous transition mode which is counter-productive in regard to service delivery, continuity and direction.

To mitigate the negative effects of the turnover of service provider staff, the Commission actively seeks to engage, inform and educate any and all new staff in the community whenever possible. The Commission is aware of the role of the Local Program Office and other CYWR personnel in inducting new staff and has communicated its availability to assist should it be required. Commission strategies and active procedures are:

- The Commission invites service providers to introduce themselves and explain their role to the Commissioners and the Local Coordinators during conference sittings or at any other times that are convenient to them
- The Commission invites service providers to attend relevant conferences on the condition that all parties agree to their attendance
- The Commission conducts service provider workshops on a regular basis
- The Commission distributes and displays information on the Commission website including Annual Reports, Quarterly Reports, *The Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*, service provider fact sheets, and associated support documents
- The Commission ensures Local Coordinators are available to meet with new staff and attend meetings as required
- The Commission offers a comprehensive overview for new service provider staff in Cairns prior to them transferring to the communities
- The Commission meets regularly with service provider and agency staff that are in Cairns for training
- The Commission provides information in a number of forums including the CYWR Service Provider workshop in September 2009, Centrelink consultations, State and Federal Parliamentary (Senate Committee and House of Representatives Committees) briefings, KPMG and other reviews as required.

- The Commission is increasing its focus on the case management of clients and encouraging communication between the WBC, ACM and FIM to facilitate cohesive service delivery. As part of this process we are reviewing our Case Management Framework to facilitate greater input from the Local Coordinators and service provider staff in community, to gain a more concise and comprehensive view of client compliance.

Working with Government Departments

Throughout this report the Commission has illustrated the difficult working environment and the many challenges faced by the Commission. There has been considerable success in many areas and the Commission would like to acknowledge the Queensland and Australian Government Departments that have invested significant time and resources to assist the Commission to meet its objectives.

These include:

- Department of Communities (Child Safety Services)
- Department of Communities (Housing and Homelessness Services)
- Department of Justice and Attorney General
- Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services)
- Queensland Department of Education and Training
- Queensland Health
- Queensland Magistrates Court
- Queensland Police Service
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services

Outlook

Intensive Case Management

The Commission recognises the value of obtaining information at the local level from service providers and agencies. It is therefore currently developing strategies to increase the case management and information gathering capacity of the Commission in the community. This will allow the Commission to develop more comprehensive and holistic client assessments.

The Commission recently engaged two Business Support Officers (BSOs) to assist the Principal Case Manager. The BSOs will undertake an enhanced in-community role in the case management of the Commission's clients. The BSO's will meet regularly with service providers to establish priority clients and track the progress of high risk and/or clients with complex issues. They will also engage with those organisations providing service in the community that are not required to report to the Commission, such as the health clinics. The expectation is that with greater communication and information sharing at the grassroots level, a greater understanding of the needs of our clients will be established. This will in turn, assist with the construction of suitable case plans and agreements and monitoring of the clients compliance.

The Commission anticipates that the increased case management will impact on staff and Local Commissioner workload due to a need for more conference time slots for client reviews. As the intake of notifications has not decreased, this together with a greater focus on case management will inevitably mean a greater workload for the Commission.

Challenges and Outlook

External Evaluation

An independent review of the Commission by the international audit and review organisation KPMG began in 2009. The review comprises various forms of fieldwork and research and is due for release in late 2010.

Information Collection, Storage and Retrieval

The unique nature of the Commission's data collection, storage and retrieval needs required the development and deployment of a database that was tailored to the needs of the Commission. The "Client Relationship Management" database has now been deployed and is largely operational. In the coming months amendments and enhancements will be made to further operationalise this database system.

Review of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act)

This year the Commission has focussed on identifying and improving ways to increase efficiencies in the administration of the Commission. The Commission has also been considering the extent to which amendments to the legislation may be possible, in light of the Commission being part of a four year trial with 18 months of the trial remaining. Recommendations for changes will be made prior to the end of 2010.

Legislative and Program Changes

The Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Other Legislation Amendment (2009 Measures) Bill 2010 was passed by the Australian Parliament on 15 March 2010 and received Royal Assent in April, 2010. Initiated at the request of the Commission, this legislative change enables Commissioners to use income management in Cape York to assist those on the Age Pension or Carer Payment.

On 21 June 2010 measures by the Australian Government to reinstate *The Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (RDA)['wealth] and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) were passed in the Senate and will take effect from 31 December 2010. The repeal of the legislation does not impact on the provisions and acts of the FRC, which are intended to be special measures under the RDA.

Voluntary Income Management

Amendments have been made to the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* that now allow community members receiving age pension and carer payment to seek and be granted Voluntary Income Management.

MOUs with Service Providers

The Commission has entered into a number of Memoranda of Understanding including:

- The Royal Flying Doctor Service (QLD Section), operators of the Wellbeing Centres in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.
- The Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) for delivery of the Ending Family Violence Program.
- The Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) in regard to providing comprehensive services for children in the communities in conjunction with the Commission.

PROFILE

Profile: Mossman Gorge Local Commissioner Loretta Spratt

I was born at the Indigenous maternity hospital on Thursday Island. My mother was raised at Ebagoolah a small settlement near Coen and my father is a member of the Olkola people of the Coen district. My family still retain close ties to our traditional homeland, the Coen outstation area of Glen Garland and return regularly for celebrations, special occasions and sorry business.

My father was a hard working cattleman who worked away from home for long periods. When my mother became ill when I was three all the children went to live at the Hope Vale Lutheran mission. My father worked hard to provide for his children and visited whenever he could, but this was hard. My father had to apply for a permit from the Aboriginal protectorate to visit his children. During one visit he had to tell us that our mother had passed away. I am the youngest of four children; my sisters Pam and Dawn and my brother Max have always cared and watched out for each other since the death of our mother and continue to be close and supportive.

At the age of nine when the mission dormitories closed, all the family stayed in Hope Vale. My sisters went to live with the Costello family and Max went to live with the McLean family. When my eldest sister Pam married I moved in with the newly weds.

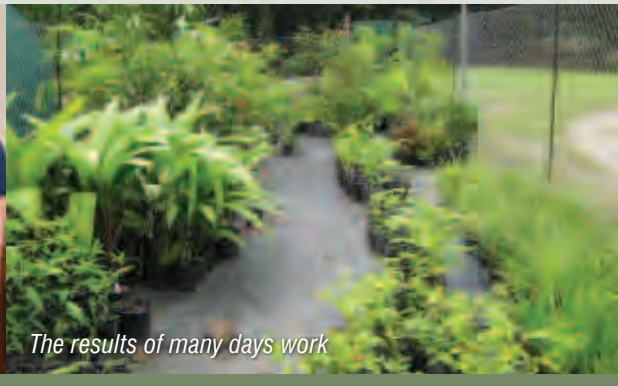
In my late teens I met a young man visiting from Mossman Gorge Nathan McLean, I later married Nathan and moved to the Gorge, I was warmly received by the residents of the Gorge and quickly came to treasure the beauty of my surrounds. I love living in the Gorge and want to stay always. I left school after completing grade seven at Cooktown School and started work in the service industry to help support my family, but I always wanted to return to school. I have since completed a number of courses, including visual arts and genealogy. I recall a highlight of my genealogy research was when I discovered during a research trip to the Canberra national archives that the famous Palmer River explorer William Baird was my grandfather.

I also recently completed a Certificate III in Horticulture, where I discovered my true passion in life. I now work propagating and using native plants and trees in landscaping, working with Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku (BBN). I use my role as a Commissioner to promote strong, healthy supportive families and work to provide all children with a safe home and opportunities for education and development. The Commission is working and teaching people to be more responsible even if some are a little more stubborn than others.

I spend my weekends fishing, enjoying the natural beauty of the Daintree area, reading and of course gardening at home. Whenever possible I spend time with my nieces, nephews and my constant friend and companion, my dog, Sally.

Local Commissioner Spratt in her greenhouse

Local Commissioners Spratt, Fischer and Shuan with Local Coordinator Karen Gibson and BSO Amy Barden



The results of many days work

The Creation of the Family Responsibilities Commission

In early 2006 the Australian Government agreed to fund the development phase of the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial proposed by the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute). The Queensland Government also agreed to participate in the development and provided in kind support and assistance throughout the development period.

The Institute subsequently released an interim report titled *"From Hand Out To Hand Up"* in May 2007 and a two volume final report with the same title in November 2007. The report outlined the Institute's proposal for the "Cape York Welfare Reform Trial" to be implemented in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. The objectives of the trial are the restoration of social norms and local Aboriginal authority. In addition the program aims to facilitate and support a positive change in social and community behaviours that have developed in response to chronic levels of welfare dependency, social dysfunction and economic exclusion within these communities.

In December 2007, the Queensland Government agreed to contribute $40 million, and the Australian Government $48 million to finance the implementation of the trial over four years.

The four broad objectives of the CYWR Agenda are:

- restoring social norms by attaching reciprocity and communal obligation to welfare payments
- redesigning welfare delivery mechanisms to ensure there are appropriate incentives to work
- supporting engagement in the broader economy within and beyond the communities
- moving from government sponsored housing to private home ownership through a range of incentives.

The CYWR is designed with a strong emphasis on partnership, capacity building, respect and use of local authority and the enhancement of services and appropriate service delivery mechanisms. The trial is implementing a range of policy, program and service delivery reforms and practical on-the-ground initiatives to help reduce welfare dependency and social dysfunction and provide pathways to participation in the real economy.

These include:

- increased and comprehensive responses to alcohol and drug misuse, gambling and addictive behaviours
- improved services to promote child, individual and family wellbeing, including intensive remedial support services and community wide universal programs
- interventions which target employment assistance, sponsor individual enterprise, increase education opportunities and encourage private home ownership
- increased investment in community capacity building through social and physical infrastructure, including 'village hubs' that support community, commercial, social, and civic activities as well as service co-location
- income management of individuals where appropriate to assist them to manage their finances.

The CYWR also has an emphasis on early intervention in order to address issues and behaviours before they escalate. A key feature of the CYWR is the creation of this independent statutory authority. The Commission is regarded as a critical mechanism to facilitate the rebuilding of intra community social norms and to encourage behavioural change through attaching reciprocity and communal obligations to welfare and other government payments. The intention of the trial and of this Commission is to enhance and complement the existing responsibilities of state and federal agencies and service delivery and community organisations.

This philosophy is grounded in the Institute's view that people in receipt of welfare payments or who are participating in the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program have an obligation to their community not to behave in ways which are detrimental to their family or to the wellbeing of the general community. At the commencement of the trial approximately 3,000 people were resident in the four communities, of these, approximately 1,065 people were receiving welfare payments and 757 people were participating in the CDEP program.

Indigenous and non Indigenous people living in the four communities receiving welfare or CDEP payments are subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. Jurisdiction continues if the individual relocates from the community, but ceases if the person is no longer a recipient of welfare payments or a CDEP participant.

The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act) was passed in the Queensland Parliament with bipartisan support on 13 March 2008. The Commission commenced operating on 1 July 2008 and conferencing began on 12 August 2008, with the first sitting being held in Coen. The Commission is currently due to cease operations on 1 January 2012. The Commission conducts conferences on a continual roster which is varied in response to workloads. The conference schedule for 2009-10 appears as Appendix B on page 106 of this report.

Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the Act provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (the Board). Under section 117 of the Act, the Board has a mandate to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships about the operation of the Commission and to similarly give advice and make recommendations to the Commissioner about the performance of the Commission's functions and to consider the reports submitted by the Commission.

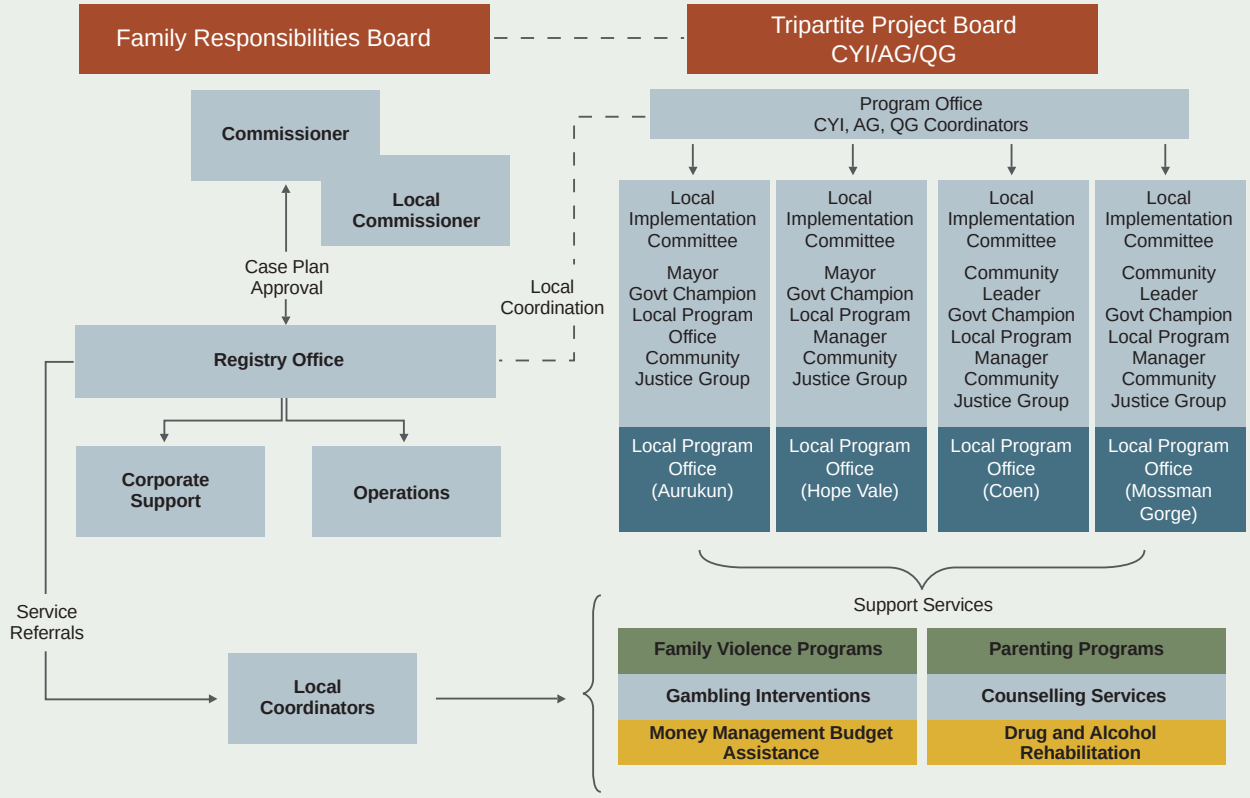
Composition of the Board

In accordance with section 123 of the Act the Board must meet at least quarterly and for a valid meeting of the Board, each member must be present at each of the meetings. Section 118 of the Act sets out the membership of the Board, which is endorsed by the Queensland Governor in Council.

The current Board members are:

Mr Ken Smith	Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Dr Jeff Harmer	Secretary, Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Mr Noel Pearson	Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership.

FRC Governance Structure
(and relationship to Welfare Reform Governance Structure)



Executive Management Team

The Commission's Executive Management Team (EMT) plays a critical role in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission by:

- providing value-based leadership
- demonstrating and incorporating high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour
- ensuring transparency and accountability through effective decision making and communication with management, staff and service providers
- providing a clear future direction for the Commission
- providing leadership and direction on:

1. Issues relating to the ongoing financial and non financial operations of the Commission and the performance of its Governance structure
2. The operation, performance and reporting of the Commission with regard to its requirements under the Act and relevant legislation.

Governance

Due to the relative small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commissions operational performance. In addition the EMT oversees the operations of Finance, Information Management and Steering, Human Resources and Planning, Audit, Risk Management, Systems Review and Workload and Performance Management. The EMT is comprised of the Commissioner, the Registrar, the Executive Officer and the Principal Case Manager. The EMT met on a regular weekly basis throughout the 2009-10 year.

Participation in External Governance Groups

In addition to the internal governance arrangement of the Commission, the Registrar participated in several external governance groups:

- Regional Managers Coordination Network
- Remote Indigenous Service Delivery Committee
- CYWR Education Stream Committee
- CYWR Social Responsibility Stream Committee

Planning

The Commission's strategic planning process ensured the Commission developed goals and strategies to fulfil the mandate of the Commission and to be consistent with current whole-of-government priorities. Including the Q2 ambitions articulated in *Towards 2020* and key financial, socio-economic and demographic challenges identified through research and consultation. The ongoing strategic planning ensures these processes are continually reviewed and updated.

Indigenous Matters (Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan)

The primary concern of the Commission is the advancement of Aboriginal peoples in the Cape York Indigenous communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mosman Gorge. This commitment and the associated policies of the Commission are demonstrated throughout this report. The operations of the Commission are consistent with the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009-2012.

Corporate Development

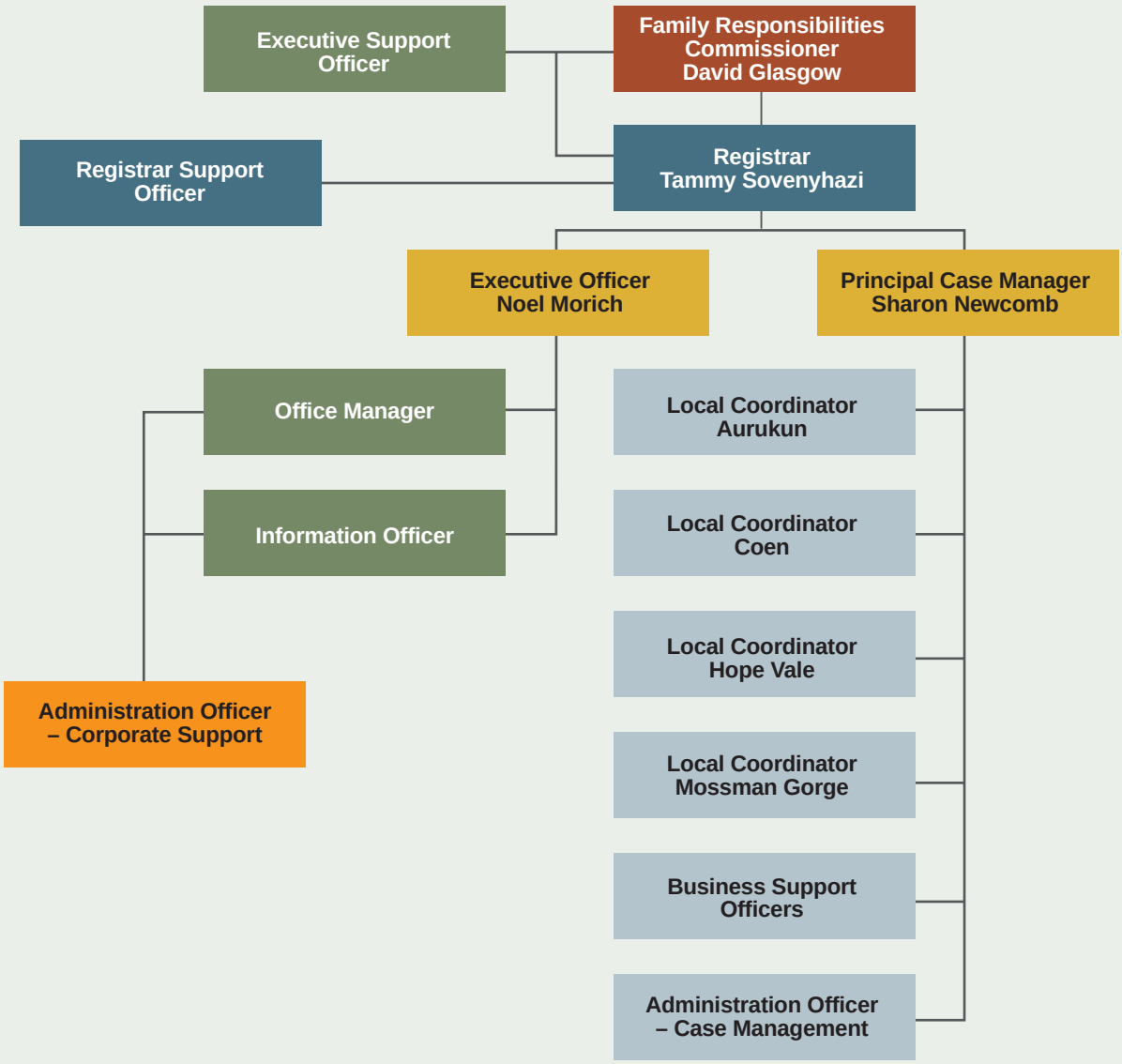
During 2009-10 the Commission facilitated a number of internal and externally sourced training programs and staff training workshops to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve the operations, internal administration and service delivery of the Commission. Training programs covered the key areas of management, leadership, TAFE accredited workplace assessment, computer skills training, workplace mediation and advocacy, writing and presentation skills, first aid, mental health first aid, performance management and workplace health and safety.

Corporate Services

During 2009-10, the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) provided human resource management, financial services, information technology and corporate services through a service level agreement with the Commission. The activities of the CAA are reported in this annual report and in the relevant reports of their parent agency, the Department of Education, Training and the Arts.

Corporate Structure

The Commission's organisational structure includes a central Registry Office based in Cairns and a remote office in each of the welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Each of the Commission's remote community based offices is staffed by a Local Coordinator.



International Travel

There was no overseas travel undertaken by the Commissioners or Registry staff in 2009-10.

Consultants and Contractors

The Commission expended $73,752.24 on consultancies between 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, details as follows:

Category	2009-10
Professional and Technical	$73,752.24
Total	$73,752.24

Private sector contractors were engaged by the Commission during the past financial year to provide professional and technical advice and services associated with the preparation of the Commission's Annual Report and with the development of a comprehensive client database.

Remuneration Statement

As disclosed in the Commission's 2009-10 financial statements, executive remuneration of $362,039.84 was received by the Commission's Chief Executive Officer (The Commissioner). The amount calculated as Executive Remuneration in the financial statements includes the direct and indirect remuneration received by the Commissioner including salary and allowances, movements in leave accruals, travel expenditure and the grossed up value of fringe benefits associated with accommodation, mobile phone use and motor vehicles.

Human Resource Management

At 30 June 2010 the Commission had a staff establishment of 17 positions, amounting to 17.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), with one position currently vacant, the Coen Local Coordinator position. Thirteen positions are based in the Cairns Registry office with a Local Coordinator based in each of the four welfare reform communities. The Local Commissioners are employed on a fee for service basis, and therefore are not employees of the Commission. The Commission was initially established with a structure of 10 positions (10.0 FTEs), 6 positions based in Cairns and four Local Coordinators, one based in each of the welfare reform communities.

Since the establishment of the Commission staffing levels and job classification levels have altered as a result of ongoing operational reviews and the completion of several Job Evaluation Management System analyses conducted on staffing levels and job classifications. The intake and assessment area has required additional staff resourcing as a result of the ongoing workloads associated with the processing of agency notifications. In addition, the case management area has required additional staffing as a result of workload.

Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff

The Commission conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the merit-based requirements of the *Public Service Act 1996*, the relevant Public Service Commission policies and the Department of Industrial Relations Directives.

During the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 no employees of the Commission took early retirement packages. During the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 no employees of the Commission were retrenched.

Professional Development

A key priority of the Commission is to maintain an environment of continual professional development and learning for all staff and the Local Commissioners.

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioner's on a constant basis for the life of the Commission to ensure it fulfills its mandate to actively work to restore local authority. The Commission facilitated internal professional development courses for the Local Commissioners on a regular basis and externally sourced training in Dispute Resolution Mediation, Justice of the Peace (Qualified and Magistrate's Court), and mental health first aid. Some of the programs are not yet completed in all communities.

The broader focus of the Commission's professional development program for employees is on skill development, career enhancement and of actively supporting a culture of ongoing learning through participation in internal workshops, on the job training and courses conducted by specialist external training providers. During 2009-2010, staff professional development, training and workshops were $44,612.63, equating to $2,534.81 per staff member. This investment provides a basis for the Commission to continually foster the development of new skills, and to improve business processes within the Commission. The priority areas for professional development continue to be cross cultural awareness, information technology, executive and management process, and procedural training. Commission staff participated in three key areas of professional development:

1. Information Technology, MS Excel and Microsoft Customer Relations Management
2. Leadership, management, workplace safety and human resource training conducted by external training providers in Brisbane and Cairns
3. On the job training including in-house workshops conducted by external providers covering first aid, performance management and mental health first aid.

Through the provision of continual high quality targeted professional development and training for staff and Local Commissioners, the Commission seeks to effectively fulfill its mandate to provide high quality and timely resolution of client, community and service provider interactions and case management reviews.

Workplace Health and Safety

The Commission's Workplace Health and Safety policy was reviewed, amended and released during the 2009-10 financial year. All staff are required to be aware of and observe the environment within the Commission, where actual and potential workplace health and safety risks are identified, discussed, acted upon and resolved. All staff have been informed of and are aware of each employee's responsibility to create and maintain a safe workplace. The Commission exercises a vigilant duty of care toward its staff and clients.

During 2009-10 the Commission engaged Langmont Advantage Ltd. as its primary Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS) provider.

The Commission maintains public liability and general insurance cover with the Queensland Government Insurance Fund (QGIF).

Information and Communication Technology

Coinciding with the establishment of the Commission in July 2008, a service level agreement was entered into with the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) for information and communication technology services. This ensured the Commission was complying with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, this agreement also provides high level security and support.

The Commission, in conjunction with CAA, has policies and network protocols in place to ensure all Commission staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding ethical information access, transference, usage and management. The Commission's information and communication technology systems support the maintenance of the required security and confidentiality of information identified during a previous external review.

The Commission is committed to sound recordkeeping practices in compliance with the *Public Records Act 2002, Information Standard 40, Recordkeeping and Information Standard 31: and Retention and Disposal of Public Records*, through the service level agreement with CAA.

Code of Conduct

All employees of the Commission, with the exception of the Family Responsibilities Commissioner and the Deputy Family Responsibilities Commissioner(s) are employed under the *Public Service Act 1996*. The Commission's Code of Conduct is consistent with the requirements of the *Public Service Act 1996*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, and the relevant Public Service Policies and Department of Industrial Relations Directives.

Following the drafting of the Code of Conduct and consultation with all staff, the Commission released its final version of the Code of Conduct during 2009-10. On 24 June 2010 the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, released for consultation the draft Single Code of Conduct for the Queensland public service. It is anticipated the final version will be released late in 2010. When released this document will supersede the current Code of Conduct of the Commission. All employees of the Commission have been given the opportunity to provide direct feedback on the draft Single Code of Conduct at the request of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

All Commission staff will be required to participate in formal training on the Single Code of Conduct for the Queensland public service. This will be facilitated by the Registry's human resource corporate service provider CAA, once it is formally released. In the interim period the Commission's Code of Conduct will remain the guiding document for employees of the Commission.

Risk Management

The objective of the Commission's Risk Management Policy is to facilitate the development of a positive risk minimisation and management culture within the Commission. In addition to assisting all staff to implement sound risk management practices which eliminate or minimise potential losses and add value to the business operations of the Commission.

In applying the risk management principles of the Commission all employees are required to:

- seek to reduce the vulnerability of the Commission to internal and external events and influences that can impede achieving the goals of the Commission
- seek to capitalise on opportunities which enhance the Commission's business processes and create value
- contribute to effective corporate governance.

The Risk Management Framework of the Commission is designed to encourage an integrated approach to managing all risks that impact on the achievement of the Commission's strategic and business objectives. It is built around having a common language and common approach to help identify and prioritise risks and the most effective way to respond to these risks.

Professional Conduct

All employees of the Commission are required to adhere to the values of the Commission and undertake their duties with professionalism, respect for diversity and courtesy. To do this, all employees are aware of their ongoing responsibilities, duty of care and requirements under the core legislation governing the Commission and the policies outlined below:

- *Public Service Act 1996*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
- Office of the Information Commissioner
- FRC Code of Conduct
- Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- Directive 13/06 Complaint Management Systems.

Complaints Management

The Commission recognises that from time to time community members from the Cape York Welfare Reform communities, private citizens, other public sector employees or staff from other organisations may have a concern about their dealings with the Commission that does not warrant an external review. The Commission has a complaints management policy and procedure which complies with Queensland public sector requirements and provides a mechanism for complaint management and resolution through an independent and appropriate process.

During the reporting period, the Commission did not receive any formal complaints regarding its operations. The Commission has a complaints management system to identify patterns and trends in complaints to ensure systemic improvement should any complaints be received in the future.

Whistleblower Complaints

In accordance with the *Whistleblower Protection act 1994* the Commission is required to report any complaints received by the Commission. From 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, no public interest disclosures were received by the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission.

Governance

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Commission observes the highest standards of transparency and accountability and strongly supports the Global Reporting Initiative's Sustainability Reporting Principles. The Commission is committed to providing stakeholders and significant others with a balanced view of the impact of our economic, environmental and social operations.

Information on our economic performance is shown throughout this report and our commitment to a social policy of protecting the welfare and fostering the development of the Indigenous people of Cape York is the central theme of the document. While the Commission's activities do not directly impact adversely on the biodiversity of flora and wildlife habitats, the Commission is careful to observe all environmental regulations governing operations in the local communities in which the Commission operates.

The Commission is environmentally aware, diligent and responsible in all activities undertaken and is committed to developing strategies that minimise environmental impact and encourage ecological sustainability.

All employees of the Commission are informed of appropriate measures to manage waste and minimise resource and water consumption.

These include:

- recycling wherever possible
- minimisation of electricity consumption
- car pooling and the use of environmentally friendly fuel wherever possible
- energy wise use of computers and other office equipment
- strategic waste management
- water conservation.

Carbon Emissions

The Commission is governed by the Queensland Government's Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy 2000 and ClimateSmart 2050 which aim to reduce the Government's carbon footprint. The Commission is committed to the introduction of data collection methods and reporting carbon emissions in line with national and international standards to comply with Queensland Government requirements.

Publications by the Commission during 2009-10

1. Annual Report 2008-09
2. Quarterly Performance Report 4
3. Quarterly Performance Report 5
4. Quarterly Performance Report 6
5. Quarterly Performance Report 7

All publications are available form the Family Responsibilities Commission website: www.frcq.org.au

The day a lady came to Conference

A lady attended conference today, she is well known to the Commissioners and the community, and she greets the commissioners as you would greet friends. She has been to conference many times and has a long list of prior notifications. Five from Child Safety Services, eight from Education Queensland and one from the Magistrates Court, but life has not been easy lately. She has three children and one grandchild living with her one of the children has identified mental health and behavioural disabilities and requires constant monitoring and her partner is currently in jail. The partner is in and out of jail regularly, usually for violence and aggressive behaviour and sometimes also for possession of illegal drugs and illegal alcohol.

The previous conference she was to attend was delayed until she returned from the local women's shelter after an incident with her partner. Her life is a constant challenge to keep the family together, meet the requirements of Child Safety Services and keep her partner out of jail. In conference the Commissioners and the lady discussed the situation and agreed on a case plan to help her deal with her partner's impending release from custody for matters relating to the latest incident when she had to go to the women's shelter.

For the first time in a long time she arrives at conference with a smile, her partner is back in the family home after being released from jail and things are going well. It has been three weeks since the partner attended the three day 'Ending Family Violence' course jointly conducted by Queensland Corrective Services, Department of Community Safety and the Commission. The partner had been conferenced by the Commission and referred to the program as soon as he returned to the community after being released from jail. As a result of the course, he tells his partner he has some understanding why he has previously been violent and what he has been doing to the family.

The partner has now made a commitment to help rebuild the family. He is making changes in his attitude and relationship and he is working hard to build a better future for the children. He is walking the children to school in the mornings and helping around the house, he wants to take responsibility for the care of his children and make sure they do not see any more violence. He knows he has lots of energy some of it bad, and thinks getting a job is the best outlet, not the drinking, smoking and fighting that he has been involved in.

The Commissioners know this is early days and temptation to misuse grog again is all around. They are also aware it is easy to become violent when frustrations boil over but they are encouraging and supportive of the efforts of everyone involved. They tell the lady they are glad to hear the good progress reports and encourage her to keep the children going to school everyday, reduce the drinking in the house and enjoy time together as a family. They will support her both as Commissioners and as extended family that care for everyone involved. The male Commissioners also talk often of the benefits of attending the men's group and doing traditional activities like fishing and hunting. They also offer the partner a place to come to when he feels like he is overheating. Day or night the Local Commissioners are working not only as Commissioners but also as community members that will be there to support the family in the weeks, months and years ahead and as members of their respective clans who will return to their country forever when their time comes.

Local Commissioner Profile

Profile

Profile: Hope Vale Commissioner Victor Gibson

My name is Victor Gibson, I was born in Cairns in October 1953 to George Gibson of the Bulcan / Warra tribe and Gertie Gibson of the Binthii / Warra tribe. Both of my parents are deceased but my memories keep them alive as the caring parents and most inspirational role models in my life. I went to the Hope Vale local primary school until year seven and at age 14 started work as a farm hand on a dairy at Oakey near Woorabinda. I later returned to Hope Vale to work as a stock hand on many cattle properties throughout Cape York before taking a job skippering the barge at Cape Flattery silica mine for nine years.

I come from a large family and have been married for many years to my partner Prisilla. We have one son, three daughters and seven beautiful grandchildren. We are a very close family and enjoy spending time together whenever we can. I still speak my native Guugu Yimithirr language and enjoy passing this on to my children and grandchildren.

I am currently employed by the University of Queensland as a wellbeing researcher. A key aspect of my role is to identify and strengthen the wellbeing network within the Hope Vale community through such programs as the men's and women's groups. I was also actively involved in setting up the first Indigenous Youth Leadership Program in Hope Vale and I am an active member of the Hope Vale Men's Group supporting youth in the community through back to roots cultural activities. I am also a leader in the development of sport and rec programs and an active member of the Hope Vale Elders Justice Group. The Justice Group represent our people in the legal system and can make a difference in the way they are dealt with.

Throughout my working life I have had held many jobs working to help build my community, including works supervisor, councillor, deputy CEO, and deputy mayor of the Hope Vale Aboriginal Council, but believe my role as a Local Commissioner will be one of the highlights of my career. I'm very passionate about making changes through supporting the younger generation and assisting them to move to the next level in their lives as well as supporting the community as a whole to progress and change as we desire.

Local Commissioner Victor Gibson at work and play

Financial Overview 2009-2010

This financial overview is a summary of the financial performance and position of the Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission). The overview also provides commentary on significant movements during 2009-10 for the Commission.

The Commission's financial reporting framework

A comprehensive set of 2009-10 financial statements covering all aspects of the Commission's activities is on page 71. These statements include explanatory notes and comparative figures for 2008-09. The Commissions financial statements have been extensively corrected in 2009-10 as a result of a change in the accounting recognition of Australian Government grant funding received in June 2008. This funding was previously apportioned across the three and a half year life of the project. This funding is now fully recognised in the 2007-08 financial year.

Administering Department

The Commission operates under the stewardship of the Department of Communities effective from 26 March 2009.

Operating result

The operating result for 2009-10 was a deficit of $0.972M The operating deficit for the 2008-09 financial year was $0.624M. The Commission's surplus for 2007-08 totalled $3,777M. The Commissions years of operations have resulted in a combined surplus of $2.181M.

About our financial statements

The purpose of the financial overview is to assist our readers to interpret our financial performance and position using plain English.

Our four primary financial statements provide specific information regarding the Commission's financial activity for the year. The purpose of these statements and how they link to each other is set out below. More detail is also provided on the items that make up these statements, and the changes that occurred in them during the year that impacted on our financial outcomes.

Income statement

Shows the extent to which equity has been increased or decreased by the surplus or deficit during the year

Income Statement	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000
Income	3,127	2,761
Less: Operating expenses	4,099	3,385
Net result for year – surplus/(deficit)	(972)	(624)

Statement of changes in equity

Shows the increase or decrease in equity

Statement of Changes in Equity	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000
Balance of equity at beginning of year	3,153	3,777
Operating surplus/(deficit)	(972)	(624)
Total equity at end of year	2,181	3,153

Cash flow statement

Shows the nature and amount of the Commission's cash inflows and outflows from all activities.

Cash Flow Statement	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000
Operating activities	(909)	(823)
Investing activities	(197)	(39)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	(1,106)	(862)
Cash at beginning of year	3,336	4,198
Cash at end of reporting year	2,230	3,336

Financial Overview 2009-2010

Balance sheet

Shows the assets and liabilities which make up equity as at 30 June 2010

Balance Sheet	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000	30 Jun 2008 $,000
Current assets	2,300	3,418	4,222
Non-current assets	253	62	-
Total assets	2,553	3,480	4,222
Current liabilities	372	327	445
Total liabilities	372	327	445
Net assets	2,181	3,153	3,777
Retained equity	2,181	3,153	3,777

Income - where did the money come from?

Total income for the period ending 30 June 2010 was $3.127M. The main type of income for the Commission was administered funding of $3.022M, which is appropriated funding received from Queensland Treasury previously through the Department of Premier and Cabinet and now through the Department of Communities. Australian Government funding of $3.5M received in the 2007-08 financial year is now recognised in the financial year it was received.

Output revenue decreased from $4.264M in the 2007-08 financial year to $2.761M in the 2008-09 financial year and increased to $3.127M in 2009-10.

Income by type	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000	30 Jun 2008 $,000
Administered revenue	3,022	2,596	750
Commonwealth grants	-	-	3,500
Other contributions	105	165	14
Total	3,127	2,761	4,264

Expenses – how was the money spent?

Total expenses for the year were $4.099M. These expenses are categorised into five areas being employee expenses, supplies and services, grants and subsidies, depreciation and amortisation and other expenses.

Expenses by type	30 Jun 2010 $,000	30 Jun 2009 $,000	30 Jun 2008 $,000
Employee expenses	1,889	1,494	197
Supplies and services	1,527	1,815	285
Grants and subsidies	586	37	-
Depreciation and amortisation	59	-	
Other expenses	38	39	5
Total	4,099	3,385	487

Assets and liabilities – what do we own and what do we owe?

Total assets at 30 June 2010 were $2.553M consisting of cash, receivables, other and intangible assets.

Total liabilities as at 30 June 2010 were $0.372M consisting mainly of payables, and accrued employee benefits.

Equity – what is our net worth?

Equity is the Commission's net worth, that is, "what we own" (total assets of $2.553 M), less "what we owe" (total liabilities of $0.372 M). Equity at 30 June 2008 was $3.777 M. Equity at 30 June 2009 was $3.153 M. Equity at 30 June 2010 was $2.181 M.

Client Profile

Moving Forward

A long time has passed since I was first asked to attend my first conference. When the local coordinator came to my house with the notice saying I had to attend I was very worried and did not go to the first two conferences. However I was given a third chance by the Commissioners, the local coordinator came to my house again and asked again to attend, luckily this time, I did.

The Commissioners spoke to me about the notifications they had received and my problems. We agreed together that I needed some help and support to get me through the difficult time I was having. The Commissioners and I talked for a long time and in the end we wrote down a case plan. I agreed to attend the Family Income Management (FIM) office to help me with my financial problems and the Commissioners helped me sort out my problems with the Department of Corrections so I could complete my probation requirements.

The past year has been a good year. I have finished all my parole requirements and saved for a number of household items. My kitchen is now complete with a fridge and a microwave. My house is gradually filling up with furniture and I am now saving for some Pride of Place work on my garden. I have also talked to my family about saving as a group so we can move into a bigger, newer house because our house is very crowded.

Taking these steps with my family has increased my self confidence a lot and also given me the confidence to take over the care of my nephew. I was able to do this because I am now feeling that I can provide him with a happy and safe environment with all the house hold items and care and attention that he needs.

2007 Young Australian of the year Tania Major with Shamuliah Ware from Hope Vale at an FRC function in Cairns

Family Responsibilities Commission Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 30 June 2010

FRC
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION

Family Responsibilities Commission
Cairns Commonwealth Centre
Level 3, 107 Lake Street
PO Box 5438
Cairns Qld 4870

Ph: 07 4057 3870
Fax: 07 4041 0974
www.frcq.org.au

17 August 2010

The Honourable D C Boyle MP
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Level 18, Mineral House
41 George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the Financial Statement for the Annual Report 2009-2010 for the Family Responsibilities Commission.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual Report Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies.*

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be accessed at http://www.frcq.org.au after 30 September 2010.

Yours sincerely

David Glasgow
Commissioner
Family Responsibilities Commission

Contents **Page No**

Statement of Comprehensive Income	75
Statement of Financial Position	76
Statement of Changes in Equity	77
Statement of Cash Flows	78
Notes To and Forming Part of the Financial Statements	79 - 99
Management Certificate	100
Audit Certificate	101 - 104

General Information

These financial statements cover the Family Responsibilities Commission. It has no controlled entities.

The Family Responsibilities Commission is an independent statutory body established under the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008.

The Commission is controlled by the State of Queensland which is the ultimate parent.

The head office and principal place of business of the Commission is:
Suite 3, Level 2, Commonwealth Building, 107 Lake Street
CAIRNS QLD 4870

A description of the nature of the Commission's operations and its principal activities is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2010

	Notes	2010 $000	2009 $000
Income from Continuing Operations			
Revenue			
Grants and other contributions	2	3,022	2,596
Other revenue	3	105	165
Total Income from Continuing Operations		3,127	2,761
Expenses from Continuing Operations			
Employee expenses	4	1,889	1,494
Supplies and services	5	1,527	1,815
Grants and subsidies	6	586	37
Depreciation and amortisation	7	59	-
Other expenses	8	38	39
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations		4,099	3,385
Operating Result from Continuing Operations		(972)	(624)
Operating Result from Discontinued Operations		-	-
Total Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income		(972)	(624)

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 30 June 2010

	Notes	2010 $000	2009 $000	As at 1 July 2008 restated* $000
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	9	2,230	3,336	4,198
Receivables	10	58	42	14
Other	11	12	40	10
Total Current Assets		2,300	3,418	4,222
Non Current Assets				
Intangible assets	12	235	62	-
Property, plant and equipment	13	18	-	-
Total Non Current Assets		253	62	-
Total Assets		2,553	3,480	4,222
Current Liabilities				
Payables	14	166	161	287
Accrued employee benefits	15	206	166	158
Total Current Liabilities		372	327	445
Total Liabilities		372	327	445
Net Assets		2,181	3,153	3,777
Equity				
Accumulated surplus		2,181	3,153	3,777
Total Equity		2,181	3,153	3,777

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

* The Commission has corrected a prior year error between Unearned Revenue and Accumulated Surplus as described in Note 22. As such, in accordance with AASB 101 para 39, a third Statement of Financial Position has been presented.

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2010

	Accumulated Surplus		Contributed Equity		TOTAL	
	2010 $000	2009 $000	2010 $000	2009 $000	2010 $000	2009 $000
Balance as at 1 July	3,153	3,777	-	-	3,153	3,777
Operating Result from Continuing Operations	(972)	(624)			(972)	(624)
Balance as at 30 June	2,181	3,153	-	-	2,181	3,153

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2010

	Notes	2010 $000	2009 $000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Inflows:			
Grants and other contributions		3,027	2,474
GST collected from customers		39	10
GST input tax credits from ATO		202	153
Interest receipts		100	169
Other		4	-
Outflows:			
Employee expenses		(1,844)	(1,391)
Supplies and services		(1,546)	(2,018)
Grants and subsidies		(586)	(37)
GST paid to suppliers		(222)	(159)
GST remitted to ATO		(39)	(10)
Other		(44)	(14)
Net cash used in operating activities	16	(909)	(823)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Inflows:			
Advances		28	-
Outflows:			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(25)	-
Payments for intangibles		(200)	(14)
Advances		-	(25)
Net cash used in investing activities		(197)	(39)
Net decrease in cash held		(1,106)	(862)
Cash at beginning of financial year		3,336	4,198
Cash at end of financial year	9	2,230	3,336

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements 2009-10

	Objectives and Principal Activities of the Commission
Note 1:	Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
Note 2:	Grants and Other Contributions
Note 3:	Other Revenue
Note 4:	Employee Expenses
Note 5:	Supplies and Services
Note 6:	Grants and Subsidies
Note 7:	Depreciation and Amortisation
Note 8:	Other Expenses
Note 9:	Cash and Cash Equivalents
Note 10:	Receivables
Note 11:	Other Current Assets
Note 12:	Intangible Assets
Note 13:	Plant and Equipment
Note 14:	Payables
Note 15:	Accrued Employee Benefits
Note 16:	Reconciliation of Operating Result to Net Cash from Operating Activities
Note 17:	Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities
Note 18:	Commitments for Expenditure
Note 19:	Contingencies
Note 20:	Events Occurring after Balance Date
Note 21:	Financial Instruments
Note 22:	Correction of Errors

Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements 2009-10

Objectives and Principal Activities of the Family Responsibilities Commission

The Family Responsibilities Commission was established through the enactment of the Family Responsibilities Act 2008 on 13 March 2008. The Commission commenced operation on 1 July 2008, and is scheduled by its enabling legislation to cease operation on 1 January 2012.

The Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) is a key component of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial.

The FRC is an independent statutory body consisting of a Family Responsibilities Commission Governing Board consisting of representatives from The Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Cape York Institute. The Commission's Chief Executive is a legally qualified Commissioner. There are Local Commissioners for each welfare reform community. All Commissioners were appointed by the Governor in Council. The Commission operates its central registry based in Cairns and regional offices in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

The FRC supports the rebuilding of social norms in the four Cape York Welfare Reform communities by:

- Rebuilding local authority and promoting respect;
- Conducting client conferencing at which community values and the expected behaviour of individuals, families and households are discussed;
- Determining appropriate actions to address the dysfunctional behaviour of people in the community;
- Where appropriate, referring individuals to community support services to assist them to address their behaviours; and
- Where appropriate, directing the person's income to be managed by Centre-link to pay for the priority needs of their family.

The Commission is funded for the outputs it delivers by parliamentary appropriations to -

(a) support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority in welfare reform community areas; and

(b) help people in welfare reform community areas to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their community and the individuals and families of the community.

The objectives to be achieved by the Commission are -

(a) holding conferences about agency notices; and

(b) dealing with the matters to which the notices relate in a way that -

(i) encourages community members who are the subject of a conference to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour; and

(ii) to promote the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living within welfare reform community areas.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Statement of Compliance

The FRC has prepared these financial statements in compliance with section 43 of the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009 .

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements, and have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations. In addition, the financial statements comply with Treasury's Minimum Reporting Requirements for the year ending 30 June 2010, and other authoritative pronouncements.

With respect to compliance with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations, the FRC has applied those requirements applicable to not-for-profit entities, as the FRC is a not-for-profit authority. Except where stated, the historical cost convention is used.

(b) The Reporting Entity

The financial statements include the value of all revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity of the Commission. The Commission does not have any controlled entities.

(c) Grants and Other Contributions

Grants, contributions, donations and gifts which are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the Commission obtains control over them. Where grants are received that are reciprocal in nature, revenue is accrued over the term of the funding arrangements.

Contributed assets are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are recognised only when a fair value can be determined reliably and the services would be purchased if they had not been donated.

(d) Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purposes of the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Cash Flows, cash assets include all cash and cheques receipted but not banked at 30 June as well as deposits at call with financial institutions.

(e) Receivables

Trade debtors are recognised at the amounts due at the time of sale or service delivery i.e. the agreed putchase/contract price. Settlement of these amounts is required within 30 days from

The collectability of receivables is assessed periodically. There is no provision for impairment at the balance sheet date. All known bad debts were written off at 30 June.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(f) Acquisitions of Assets

Actual cost is used for the initial recording of all non-current physical and intangible asset acquisitions. Cost is determined as the value given as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition, including all other costs incurred in getting the assets ready for use. However, any training costs are expensed as incurred.

(g) Plant and Equipment

Items of plant and equipment with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of $5,000 are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition. Items with a lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition.

(h) Intangibles

Intangible assets with a cost or other value equal to or greater than $100,000 are recognised in the financial statements, items with a lesser value being expensed. Each intangible asset is amortised over its estimated useful life to the agency, less any anticipated residual value. The residual value is zero for all the Commission's intangible assets.

It has been determined that there is not an active market for any of the Commission's intangible assets. As such, the assets are recognised and carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

No intangible assets have been classified as held for sale or form part of a disposal group held for sale.

Purchased Software

The purchase cost of this software has been capitalised and is being amortised on a straight-line basis over the period of the expected benefit to the Commission.

(i) Revaluations of Non-Current Physical and Intangible Assets

Where intangible assets have an active market, they are measured at fair value, otherwise they are measured at cost.

Plant and equipment is measured at cost in accordance with Treasury's *Non-Current Assets Policies.*

(j) Amortisation and Depreciation of Intangibles and Plant and Equipment

All intangible assets of the Commission have finite useful lives and are amortised on a straight line basis.

Plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis so as to allocate the net cost or revalued amount of each asset, less its estimated residual value, progressively over its estimated useful life to the agency.

Assets under construction (work in progress) are not depreciated until they reach service delivery capacity. Service delivery capacity relates to when construction is complete and the asset is first put to use or is installed ready for use in accordance with its intended application. These assets are then reclassified to the relevant classes with property, plant and equipment.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(j) Amortisation and Depreciation of Intangibles and Plant and Equipment (contd)

Where assets have separately identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned useful lives distinct from the asset to which they relate and are depreciated accordingly.

Any expenditure that increases the originally assessed capacity or service potential of an asset is capitalised and the new depreciable amount is depreciated over the remaining useful life of the asset to the agency.

For each class of depreciable asset, where held, the following depreciation and amortisation periods are used:

Class	***Period ****
Plant and equipment	
. Leasehold improvements	2.08 years
Intangibles	
. Software Purchased	1.8 years

* This period is based on the Commission's term.

(k) Impairment of Non-Current Assets

All non-current physical and intangible assets are assessed for indicators of impairment on an annual basis. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, the Commission determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

The asset's recoverable amount is determined as the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and depreciated replacement cost.

An impairment loss is recognised immediately in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount. When the asset is measured at a revalued amount, the impairment loss is offset against the asset revaluation surplus of the relevant class to the extent available.

Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount, but so that the increased carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in prior years. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the reversal of the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation increase.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(l) Leases

A distinction is made in the financial statements between finance leases that effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all risks and benefits incidental to ownership, and operating leases, under which the lessor retains substantially all risks and benefits.

Where a non-current asset is acquired by means of a finance lease, the asset is recognised at the lower of the fair value of the leased property and the present value of the minimum lease payments. The liability is recognised at the same amount. There were no finance leases during the year.

Operating lease payments are representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets and are expensed in the periods in which they are incurred.

(m) Payables

Trade creditors are recognised upon receipt of the goods or services ordered and are measured at the agreed purchase/contract price, gross of applicable trade and other discounts. Amounts owing are unsecured and are generally settled on 30 day terms.

(n) Financial Instruments

Recognition

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position when the Commission becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Classification

Financial instruments are classified and measured as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents - held at fair value through profit or loss
- Receivables - held at amortised cost
- Payables - held at amortised cost

The Commission does not enter transactions for speculative purposes, nor for hedging. Apart from cash and cash equivalents, the Commission holds no financial assets classified at fair value through profit or loss.

All disclosures relating to the measurement basis and financial risk management of financial instruments held by the Commission are included in Note 21.

(o) Employee Benefits

Employer superannuation contributions and long service leave levies are regarded as employee benefits.

Payroll tax and workers' compensation insurance are a consequence of employing employees, but are not counted in an employee's total remuneration package. They are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as employee related expenses.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(o) Employee Benefits (contd)

Wages, Salaries, Recreation Leave and Sick leave

Wages, salaries and recreation leave due but unpaid at reporting date are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position at the current salary rates.

For unpaid entitlements expected to be paid within 12 months, the liabilities are recognised at their undiscounted values. Entitlements not expected to be paid within 12 months are classified as non-current liabilities and recognised at their present value, calculated using yields on Fixed Rate Commonwealth Government bonds of similar maturity, after projecting the remuneration rates expected to apply at the time of likely settlement.

Prior history indicates that on average, sick leave taken in each reporting period is less than the entitlement accrued. This is expected to continue in future periods. Accordingly, it is unlikely that existing accumulated entitlements will be used by employees and no liability for unused sick leave entitlements is recognised.

As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

Long Service Leave

Under the Queensland Government's long service leave scheme, a levy is made on the Commission to cover the cost of employees' long service leave. The levies are expensed in the period in which they are payable. Amounts paid to employees for long service leave are claimed from the scheme quarterly in arrears.

No provision for long service leave is recognised in the Commission's financial statements, the liability being held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.*

Superannuation

Employer superannuation contributions are paid to QSuper, the superannuation plan for Queensland Government employees, at rates determined by the Treasurer on the advice of the State Actuary. Contributions are expensed in the period in which they are paid or payable. The Commission's obligation is limited to its contribution to QSuper.

Therefore, no liability is recognised for accruing superannuation benefits in the Commission's financial statements, the liability being held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in those financial statements pursuant to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting* .

Executive Remuneration

The executive remuneration disclosures in the employee expenses note (Note 4) in the financial statements include:

- the aggregate remuneration of all senior executive officers (including the Chief Executive Officer) whose remuneration for the financial year is $100,000 or more; and
- the number of senior executives whose total remuneration for the financial year falls within each successive $20,000 band, commencing at $100,000.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(o) Employee Benefits (contd)

Executive Remuneration (contd)

The remuneration disclosed is all remuneration paid or payable, directly or indirectly, by the Commission or any related party in connection with the management of the affairs of the Commission, whether as an executive or otherwise. For this purpose, remuneration includes:

- wages and salaries;
- accrued leave (that is, the increase/decrease in the amount of annual and long service leave owed to an executive, inclusive of any increase in the value of leave balances as a result of salary rate increases or the like);
- performance pay received or due and receivable in relation to the financial year, provided that a liability exists (namely a determination has been made prior to the financial statements being signed), and can be reliably measured even though the payment may not have been made during the financial year;
- accrued superannuation (being the value of all employer superannuation contributions during the financial year, both paid and payable as at 30 June);
- car parking benefits and the cost of motor vehicles, such as lease payments, fuel costs, registration/insurance, repairs/maintenance and fringe benefit tax on motor vehicles incurred by the Commission during the financial year, both paid and payable as at 30 June, net of any amounts subsequently reimbursed by the executives;
- housing, being the market value of the rent or rental subsidy, where rent is part-paid by the executive during the financial year, both paid and payable as at 30 June;
- allowances (which are included in the remuneration agreements of executives, such as airfares or other travel costs paid to/for executives whose homes are situated in a location other than the location they work in); and
- fringe benefits tax included in remuneration agreements.

The disclosures apply to all senior executives with remuneration above $100,000 in the financial year. 'Remuneration' means any money, consideration or benefit, but excludes amounts in payment or reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred for the benefit of the entity.

(p) Provisions

Provisions are recorded when the Commission has a present obligation, either legal or constructive as a result of a past event. They are recognised at the amount expected at reporting date at which the obligation will be settled in a future period. Where the settlement of the obligation is expected after 12 or more months, the obligation is discounted to the present value using an appropriate discount rate.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(q) Insurance

The Commissions's risks are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund, premiums being paid on a risk assessment basis. In addition, the Commission pays premiums to Workcover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee

(r) Services Received Free of Charge or For Nominal Value

Contributions of services are recognised only if the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated and their value can be measured reliably. Where this is the case, an equal amount is recognised as a revenue and an expense.

(s) Taxation

The Commission is a State body as defined under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* and is exempt from Commonwealth taxation with the exception of Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and Goods and Services Tax (GST). FBT and GST are the only taxes accounted for by the Commission. GST credits receivable from, and GST payable to the ATO, are recognised (refer to note 10).

(t) Issuance of Financial Statements

The financial statements are authorised for issue by the Commissioner at the date of signing the management certificate.

(u) Judgements

The preparation of financial statements necessarily requires the determination and use of certain critical accounting estimates, assumptions, and management judgements that have potential to cause a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year. Such estimates, judgements and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in future periods as relevant.

(v) Rounding and Comparatives

Amounts included in the financial statements are in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest $1,000 or, where that amount is $500 or less, to zero, unless disclosure of the full amount is specifically required.

Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current reporting period.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (contd)

(w) Implementation of the Shared Services Initiative

The Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) provides the Family Responsibilities Commission with corporate services under the "Shared Services Provider" model. The fees and terms of the services are agreed through a Service Level Agreement, negotiated annually and include:

- Financial systems and processing
- Management accounting
- Human resources recruitment, payroll and consultancy
- Information systems and support in relation to records management and building maintenance.

(x) New and Revised Accounting Standards

The Commission did not voluntarily change any of its accounting policies during 2009-10. Those new and amended Australian accounting standards that were applicable for the first time in the 2009-10 financial year and that had a significant impact on the department's financial statements are as follows.

The Commission complied with the revised AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements as from 2009-10. This revised standard does not have any measurement or recognition implications. Pursuant to the change of terminology used in the revised AASB 101, the Balance Sheet is now re-named to the Statement of Financial Position, and the Cash Flow Statement has now been re-named to Statement of Cash Flows. The former Income Statement has been replaced by a Statement of Comprehensive Income. In line with the new concept of 'comprehensive income', the bottom of this new statement contains certain transactions that previously were detailed in the Statement of Changes in Equity (refer to the items under the sub-heading "Other Comprehensive Income" in the new Statement of Comprehensive Income). The Statement of Changes in Equity now only includes details of transactions with owners in their capacity as owners, in addition to the total comprehensive income for the relevant components of equity.

The Commission is not permitted to early adopt a new or amended accounting standard ahead of the specified commencement date unless approval is obtained from the Treasury Department. Consequently, the Commission has not applied any Australian accounting standards and interpretations that have been issued but are not yet effective. The Commission applies standards and interpretations in accordance with their respective commencement dates.

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations with future commencement dates are either not applicable to the Commission's activities, or have no material impact.

		2010 $000	2009 $000
2. Grants and Other Contributions			
Grants		3,022	2,596
Total		3,022	2,596
3. Other Revenue			
Interest		101	165
Other		4	-
Total		105	165
4. Employee Expenses			
Employee Benefits			
Wages and salaries		1,333	998
Annual leave expense		141	199
Employer superannuation contributions	*	166	126
Long service leave levy	*	26	21
Employee Related Expenses			
Workers' compensation premium	*	3	1
Payroll tax and fringe benefits	*	86	54
Other employee related expenses		134	95
Total		1,889	1,494

* Refer to Note 1(o).

The number of employees including both full-time employees and part-time employees measured on a full-time equivalent basis:

	2010	2009
Number of employees:	18	14

4. Employee Expenses (contd)

Executive Remuneration

The number of senior executives who receive or were due to receive total remuneration of $100,000 or more:

	2010	2009
$360,000 to $379,999	1	-
$400,000 to $419,999	-	1
Total	1	1

	2010 $000	2009 $000
Total remuneration of executives shown above #	362	413

The amount calculated as executive remuneration in these financial statements includes the direct remuneration received, as well as items not directly received by senior executives, such as the movement in leave accruals and fringe benefits tax paid on motor vehicles. This amount will therefore differ from advertised executive remuneration packages which do not include the latter items.

The total separation and redundancy/termination benefit payments to executives shown above.	**Nil**	**Nil**

5. Supplies and Services

Building maintenance	5	5
Corporate service charges	112	70
Utilities	62	49
Property security charges	12	-
Equipment and building refurbishment	11	124
Consultants and contractors	57	107
Materials and running costs	216	253
Operating lease rentals	145	69
Staff travel	275	254
Computer costs	403	740
Local Commissioner fees	229	144
Total	1,527	1,815

6. Grants and Subsidies

Grant expense	586	37
Total	586	37

			2010 $000	2009 $000
7.	**Depreciation and Amortisation**			
	Depreciation and amortisation were incurred in respect of:			
	Plant and equipment		7	-
	Software		52	-
	Total		59	-
8.	**Other Expenses**			
	Insurance		5	4
	External audit fees	*	29	35
	Donations		4	-
	Total		38	39

* Total external audit fees relating to the 2009-10 financial year are estimated to be $37,000 (2008-09: $35,000). There are no non-audit services included in this amount.

9.	**Cash and Cash Equivalents**			
	Imprest accounts		1	1
	Cash at bank and on hand		2,229	3,335
	Total		2,230	3,336

Interest earned on cash held with the Commonwealth Bank earned between 2.85% to 4.35% in 2009-10 (2.85% and 7.10% in 2008-09).

10.	**Receivables**			
	Trade debtors		19	26
			19	26
	GST receivable		28	8
			28	8
	Interest receivable		9	8
	Long service leave reimbursements		2	-
	Total		58	42
11.	**Other Current Assets**			
	Prepayments		-	5
	Advances		10	35
	Other		2	-
	Total		12	40

	2010 $000	2009 $000
12. Intangible Assets		
Software Purchased		
At cost	287	-
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(52)	-
	235	-
Work in progress		
At cost	-	62
	-	62
Total	235	62

Intangibles Reconciliation

	Software Purchased		Work In Progress		Total	
	2010 $000	2009 $000	2010 $000	2009 $000	2010 $000	2009 $000
Carrying amount at 1 July	-	-	62	-	62	-
Acquisitions	-	-	225	62	225	62
Transfers	287	-	(287)	-	-	-
Depreciation for period	(52)	-	-	-	(52)	-
Carrying amount at 30 June	**235**	**-**	**-**	**62**	**235**	**62**

Amortisation of intangibles is included in the line item 'Depreciation and Amortisation' in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

	2010 $000	2009 $000
13. Plant and Equipment		
Leasehold improvements		
At cost	25	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(7)	-
Total	**18**	**-**

Plant and Equipment Reconciliation

	Leasehold Improvements		Total	
	2010 $000	2009 $000	2010 $000	2009 $000
Carrying amount at 1 July	-	-	-	-
Acquisitions	25	-	25	-
Depreciation for period	(7)	-	(7)	-
Carrying amount at 30 June	**18**	**-**	**18**	**-**

	2010 $000	2009 $000
14. Payables		
Trade creditors	19	-
Audit fees	20	35
Intangibles	-	65
Contractors and consultants	25	-
Computer costs	14	22
Staff training	17	-
Recruitment	5	3
Motor vehicle related	2	11
Communications	4	4
Travel related	36	10
Other	24	11
Total	166	161
15. Accrued Employee Benefits		
Current		
Salary and wage related	7	2
Recreation leave	192	155
Long service leave levy payable	7	5
Superannuation payable	-	4
Total	206	166
16. Reconciliation of Operating Result to Net Cash from Operating Activities		
Operating surplus/(deficit)	(972)	(624)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	59	-
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade receivables	5	(26)
(Increase)/decrease in interest receivables	(1)	4
Increase in GST receivables	(20)	(6)
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	-	(5)
Decrease in trade creditors	(20)	(195)
Increase/(decrease) in GST payable	-	-
Increase in accrued employee benefits	40	29
Net cash used in operating activities	(909)	(823)

	2010 $000	2009 $000

17. Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities

No assets or liabilities were received or donated to / transferred by the Commission and recognised as revenues and expenses.

18. Commitments for Expenditure

(a) Non-Cancellable Operating Lease

Commitments under operating leases at reporting date are inclusive of anticipated GST and are payable as follows:

Not later than one year	113	59
Later than one year and not later than five years	129	108
Total	242	167

Operating leases are entered into as a means of acquiring access to office accommodation and office equipment for the Commission. Lease payments are generally fixed, but with inflation escalation clauses on which contingent rentals are determined.

One of the leases has a renewal option. Where such option exists, it is exercisable at market prices. No purchase options exist in relation to operating leases and no operating leases contain restrictions on financing or other leasing activities.

(b) Capital Expenditure Commitments

Material classes of capital expenditure commitments inclusive of anticipated GST, contracted for at reporting date but not recognised in the accounts are payable as follows:

	Plant & Equipment	
Payable not later than one year	-	57
Total	-	**57**

19. Contingencies

There are no legal actions that are known to the Commission at 30 June 2010.

20. Events Occurring after Balance Date

There were no significant events occurring after balance date.

21. Financial Instruments

(a) Categorisation of Financial Instruments

The Commission has the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities:

Category	Note	2010 $'000	2009 $'000
Financial Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	9	2,230	3,336
Receivables	10	58	42
Total		**2,288**	**3,378**
Financial Liabilities			
Financial liabilities measured at amortised costs:			
Payables	14	166	161
Total		**166**	**161**

(b) Financial Risk Management

The Commission's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks - interest rate risk, credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk.

Financial risk management is implemented pursuant to Government and Commission policy. These policies focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and seek to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Commission.

All financial risk is managed by Executive Management under policies approved by the Commission. The Commission provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as policies covering specific areas.

The Commission measures risk exposure using a variety of methods as follows -

Risk Exposure	Measurement method
Credit Risk	Ageing analysis, earnings at risk
Liquidity Risk	Sensitivity analysis
Market Risk	Interest rate sensitivity analysis

(c) Credit Risk Exposure

Credit risk exposure refers to the situation where the Commission may incur financial loss as a result of another party to a financial instrument failing to discharge their obligation.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the gross carrying amount of those assets inclusive of any provisions for impairment.

21. Financial Instruments (contd)

(c) Credit Risk Exposure (contd)

The following table represents the Commission's maximum exposure to credit risk based on contractual amounts net of any allowances:

Maximum Exposure to Credit Risk		2010	2009
Category	**Note**	**$'000**	**$'000**
Financial Assets			
Cash	9	2,230	3,336
Receivables	10	58	42
Total		**2,288**	**3,378**

No collateral is held as security and no credit enhancements relate to financial assets held by the Commission.

The Commission manages credit risk through the use of management reports. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to credit default by ensuring that the Commission invests in secure assets and monitors all funds owed on a timely basis. Exposure to credit risk is monitored on an ongoing basis.

No financial assets and financial liabilities have been offset and presented net in the Statement of Financial Performance.

The method for calculating any provision for impairment is based on past experience, current and expected changes in economic conditions and changes in client credit ratings.

No financial assets have had their terms renegotiated so as to prevent them from being past due or impaired, and are stated at the carrying amounts as indicated.

21. Financial Instruments (contd)

(c) Credit Risk Exposure (contd)

Aging of past due but not impaired as well as impaired financial assets are disclosed in the following tables:

2010 Financial Assets Past Due But Not Impaired

	Overdue				
	Less than 30 Days	30-60 Days	61-90 Days	More than 90 Days	Total
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Financial Assets					
Receivables	39	-	-	19	58
Total	**39**	**-**	**-**	**19**	**58**

2009 Financial Assets Past Due But Not Impaired

	Overdue				
	Less than 30 Days	30-60 Days	61-90 Days	More than 90 Days	Total
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Financial Assets					
Receivables	41	1	-	-	42
Total	**41**	**1**	**-**	**-**	**42**

(d) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk refers to the situation where the Commission may encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset.

The Commission is exposed to liquidity risk in respect of its payables.

The Commission manages liquidity risk through the use of management reports. This strategy aims to reduce the exposure to liquidity risk by ensuring the Commission has sufficient funds available to meet employee and supplier obligations as they fall due. This is achieved by ensuring that minimum levels of cash are held within the various bank accounts so as to match the expected duration of the various employee and supplier liabilities.

21. Financial Instruments (contd)

(d) Liquidity Risk (contd)

The following table sets out the liquidity risk of financial liabilities held by the Commission. It represents the contractural maturity of financial liabilities, calculated based on undiscounted cash flows relating to the liabilities at reporting data.

		2010 Payable in			Total
		<1year	1-5 years	>5 years	
	Note	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	14	166	-	-	166
Total		**166**	**-**	**-**	**166**

		2009 Payable in			Total
		<1year	1-5 years	>5 years	
	Note	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	14	161	-	-	161
Total		**161**	**-**	**-**	**161**

(e) Market Risk

The Commission does not trade in foreign currency and is not materially exposed to commodity price changes. The Commission is exposed to interest rate risk through its cash deposits in interest bearing accounts. The Commission does not undertake any hedging in relation to interest risk and manages its risk as per the liquidity risk management strategy.

(f) Interest Rate Sensitivity Analysis

The Commission is not sensitive to interest rate movements.

(g) Fair Value

The fair value of trade receivables and payables is assumed to approximate the value of the original transaction, less any provision for impairment.

The Commission has not offset any assets and liabilities.

22. Correction of Errors

A Commonwealth grant of $3.5 million received in the 2007-08 financial year was classified as a reciprocal grant and brought to account as unearned revenue in 2007-08. In 2008-09, $1.0 million of this was brought to account as revenue. The grant should have been initally classified as non reciprocal and recognised as revenue in 2007-08. The result of this error is an understatement of income and the operating result of $3.5 million in 2007-08 and an overstatement of income and the operating result of $1.0 million in 2008-09. This also resulted in errors in the balance sheet, with current liabilities (unearned revenue) being overstated and equity understated by $3.5 million in 2007-08 and $2.5 million in 2008-09, respectively .

Funding of $96,411 received in the 2008-09 financial year was offset to employee expenses in 2008-09. This funding should have been recognised as grant revenue in 2008-09. The result of this error is an understatement of income and an understatement of employee expenses in 2008-09. There was no impact on the operating result.

Intangibles work in progress in the 2008-09 financial year included scoping expenses of $16,707. These expenses should not have been capitalised. The result of this error is an understatement of expenses and overstatement of the operating result of $16,707, and an overstatement of intangibles work in progress in 2008-09.

These errors have been corrected by restating each of the affected comparative financial statement line items for the prior years, as described above.

Management Certificate
for the Family Responsibilities Commission

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to section 62(1) of the *Financial Acccountability Act 2009* (the Act), relevant sections of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with section 62 (1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

(a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and

(b) the statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of Family Responsibilities Commission for the period ended 30 June 2010 and of the financial position of the entity at the end of that period.

David Robert Glasgow
Commissioner
Family Responsibilities Commission

Date: 13/8/2010

Noel Morich
Executive Officer
Family Responsibilties Commission

Date: 13.08.2010

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission

Matters Relating to the Electronic Presentation of the Audited Financial Report

The auditor's report relates to the financial report of the Family Responsibilities Commission for the financial year ended 30 June 2010 included on the Commission's website. The Commissioner is responsible for the integrity of the Commission's website. I have not been engaged to report on the integrity of the Commission's website. The auditor's report refers only to the statements named below. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from these statements. If users of the financial report are concerned with the inherent risks arising from electronic data communications they are advised to refer to the hard copy of the audited financial report, available from the Family Responsibilities Commission, to confirm the information included in the audited financial report presented on this website.

These matters also relate to the presentation of the audited financial report in other electronic media including CD Rom.

Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Family Responsibilities Commission which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2010, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and certificates given by the Commissioner and Executive Officer.

The Commissioner's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Commissioner is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with prescribed accounting requirements identified in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, including compliance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations). This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit is planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of risks of material misstatement in the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control, other than in expressing an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Commissioner, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report including any mandatory financial reporting requirements as approved by the Treasurer for application in Queensland.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

The *Auditor-General Act 2009* promotes the independence of the Auditor General and all authorised auditors. The Auditor-General is the auditor of all Queensland public sector entities and can only be removed by Parliament.

The Auditor-General may conduct an audit in any way considered appropriate and is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which audit powers are to be exercised. The Auditor-General has for the purposes of conducting an audit, access to all documents and property and can report to Parliament matters which in the Auditor-General's opinion are significant.

Auditor's Opinion

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* –

(a) I have received all the information and explanations which I have required; and

(b) in my opinion:

(i) the prescribed requirements in respect of the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and

(ii) the financial report has been drawn up so as to present a true and fair view, in accordance with the prescribed accounting standards of the transactions of the Family Responsibilities Commission for the financial year 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 and of the financial position as at the end of that year.

J P BEH FCPA
(as Delegate of the Auditor-General of Queensland)

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

DIRECTOR OF AUDIT
19 AUG 2010
QUEENSLAND AUDIT OFFICE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission

Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Family Responsibilities Commission which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2010, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and certificates given by the Commissioner and Executive Officer.

The Commissioner's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Commissioner is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with prescribed accounting requirements identified in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, including compliance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations). This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. The audit was conducted in accordance with the *Auditor-General of Queensland Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require compliance with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and that the audit is planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of risks of material misstatement in the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control, other than in expressing an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Commissioner, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report including any mandatory financial reporting requirements as approved by the Treasurer for application in Queensland.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

The *Auditor-General Act 2009* promotes the independence of the Auditor-General and all authorised auditors. The Auditor-General is the auditor of all Queensland public sector entities and can only be removed by Parliament.

The Auditor-General may conduct an audit in any way considered appropriate and is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which audit powers are to be exercised. The Auditor-General has for the purposes of conducting an audit, access to all documents and property and can report to Parliament matters which in the Auditor-General's opinion are significant.

Auditor's Opinion

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009* –

(a) I have received all the information and explanations which I have required; and

(b) in my opinion –

(i) the prescribed requirements in respect of the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and

(ii) the financial report has been drawn up so as to present a true and fair view, in accordance with the prescribed accounting standards of the transactions of the Family Responsibilities Commission for the financial year 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 and of the financial position as at the end of that year.

J P BEH FCPA
(as Delegate of the Auditor-General of Queensland)

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

DIRECTOR OF AUDIT
19 AUG 2010
QUEENSLAND AUDIT OFFICE

APPENDIX A

Family Responsibilities Board – Schedule of Meetings

Date of FR Board Meeting	Venue	Attendees
17 August 2009	Executive Building, 100 George Street, Brisbane	Mr Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Mr Noel Pearson, Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary, Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
16 November 2009	Executive Building, 100 George Street, Brisbane	Mr Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Mr Noel Pearson, Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary, Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
22 February 2010	Executive Building, 100 George Street, Brisbane	Mr Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Mr Noel Pearson, Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary, Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
17 May 2010	Executive Building, 100 George Street, Brisbane	Mr Ken Smith, Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Mr Noel Pearson, Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership; Dr Jeff Harmer, Secretary, Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

APPENDIX B

SITTING CALENDAR

Family Responsibilities Commission 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2009

Week Commencing	Coen	Aurukun	Mossman Gorge	Hope Vale	Cairns Office
6 July*					Training week
13 July				14,15	13,16
20 July					Estimates Brisbane
27 July	27,28	28,29,30			31
3 August			3	4,5	6,7
10 August					All Week
17 August			Thurs 20	18, 19	17 Brisbane Board, 21
24 August	24,25	26,27			28
31 August			31 August	1,2 Sept	3,4 Sept
7 September		7,8,9,10			11
14 September			Thurs 17	15,16	17,18
21 September	21,22	23,24			25
28 September					Training Week
5 October			Thurs 8	6,7	5, 9
12 October		13,14,15			16
19 October			Thurs 22	20,21	19,23
26 October	26	27,28,29			30
2 November			Thurs 5	3,4	2,6
9 November		10,11,12			13 Brisbane Parliamentary Committee
16 November				17,18	16 Brisbane Board, 20
23 November	23	24,25,26			23,27
30 November				Mon 30 Nov 1,2 Dec	3, 4 Alice Springs
7 December	7	8,9,10			11
14 December			Thurs 17	15,16	14,18
21 December					All Week

*Magistrate Wendy Cull acted in the role of Deputy Commissioner from 1 July – 12 July 2009, no conferences were held during this period. Commissioner David Glasgow conducted all conferences in the period July 2009 – June 2010.

SITTING CALENDAR

Family Responsibilities Commission 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2010

Week Commencing	Coen	Aurukun	Mossman Gorge	Hope Vale	Cairns Office
4 January					All week
11 January					All week
18 January					All week
25 January					All week
1 February		2, 3, 4			1, 5
8 February			11	9,10	8,12
15 February	15	16, 17, 18			19
22 February			25	23, 24	22 Board Meeting, 26
1 March					All week
8 March	8	9, 10, 11			12
15 March				16,17	15, 19
22 March	22	24, 25			23, 26 Social Development Committee
29 March			29 Mar	30, 31	1 Apr, 2 Apr Good Friday
5 April					All week
12 April		13,14,15			12, 16
19 April			22	20, 21	19, 23
26 April		27, 28, 29			30, 26 Anzac Day
3 May			6	4, 5	7, 3 May Day
10 May	10	11, 12, 13			14
17 May					17 Board Meeting, 18, 19, 20, 21
24 May		25, 26, 27			28
31 May/1 June			3	1, 2	31, 4
7 June		8, 9, 10			7, 11
14 June			17	15, 16	18, 14 Queens Birthday
21 June	21	22, 23			24 & 25 'Closing the Gap' Canberra
28 June					All week

Appendix C

Cape York Welfare Reform

The Cape York Welfare Reforms are a partnership between four Cape York communities, the Australian Government, the Queensland Government and the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership. The Cape York Welfare Reforms aim to address passive dependence on welfare and rebuild social norms in the communities.

The participating communities

The Cape York Welfare Reform communities are:

- Aurukun
- Coen
- Hope Vale
- Mossman Gorge and
- Associated outstations.

Aurukun

Aurukun is on the western coast of Cape York and is approximately 900 kilometres northwest of Cairns, and about 200 kilometres south of Weipa. The community had an estimated resident adult population of 793 people as at 30 June 2009.

Coen

The township of Coen is about halfway between Cairns and the tip of Cape York. It is not a discrete Aboriginal community and is part of Cook Shire. The community had an estimated resident adult population of 192 people as at 30 June 2009.

Hope Vale

Hope Vale is situated on the Cape York Peninsula and is 46 kilometres northwest of Cooktown. The estimated resident adult population of Hope Vale was 582 people at 30 June 2009.

Mossman Gorge

Mossman Gorge is a small Aboriginal community 75 kilometres north of Cairns, 4 kilometres from Mossman (the nearest town), and approximately 25 kilometres by road from Port Douglas. It is not a discrete Aboriginal community and is part of the Cairns Regional Council area. The community had an estimated resident adult population of 99 people at 30 June 2009.

Note: Statistics from ABS correct as at 30 June 2009

Glossary of Terms

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACOSS	Australian Council of Social Service
ACMs	Attendance Case Managers
ACMF	Attendance Case Management Framework
ATSIS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services
BSO	Business Support Officer
CAA	Corporate Administration Agency
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIM	Conditional Income Management
CSS	Child Safety Services
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CYAAA	Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform
DET	Department of Education and Training (Qld)
DoC	Department of Communities (Qld)
DPC	Department of the Premier and Cabinet (Qld)
ECIS	Every Child is Special
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FIM	Family Income Management
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
FRB	Family Responsibilities Board
FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITEC	Industry Training and Education Council
JEMS	Job Evaluation management System
LPO	Local Program Office
MD	Managing Director
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
RDA	Racial Discrimination Act
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
SLA	Service Level Agreement
UGG	United Government Gateway
VIM	Voluntary Income Management
WBC	Wellbeing Centre

Also:

Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute)

Family Responsibilities Board (the Board)

Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)

Mr David Glasgow, Family Responsibilities Commissioner (the Commissioner)

Contact Details

Family Responsibilities Commission

Cairns Central Registry
PO Box 5438, Cairns Qld 4870
Level 3, 107 Lake Street, Cairns
Ph (07) 4057 3870
Fax: (07) 4041 0974

Aurukun
CJG Building, Wuungkah Street, Aurukun 4871
Ph (07) 4060 6185
Fax (07) 4060 6094

Coen
CRAC Building, Taylor Street, Coen 4871
Ph (07) 4060 1037
Fax (07) 4060 1206

Hope Vale
Old Hospital Building, Aerodrome Road, Hope Vale
Ph (07) 4060 9153
Fax (07) 4060 9137

Mossman Gorge
Lunde Street, Mossman Gorge 4873
Ph (07) 4098 1908
Ph/Fax (07) 4098 1908

For more information on the communities and population compositions, view the Quarterly Reports at: www.indigenous.qld.gov.au and www.statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles

Hope Vale Local Commissioner Victor Gibson supported by the Principal Case Manager Sharon Newcomb addressing the ACOSS conference in Canberra, March 2010

FRC
FAMILY
RESPONSIBILITIES
COMMISSION

Family Responsibilities Commission
Annual Report 2009-10
ADDENDUM

Carers Charter

The Commission recognises the responsibilities legislated under *the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008* for the valuable contribution by carers to the people they care for and the benefit, including the social and economic benefit, provided by carers to the community. The Charter will be circulated to all staff to ensure an awareness and understanding of the legislation. The Commission adopts the work-life balance provisions for its employees employed under the *Public Service Act 2008,* including carer's leave and flexible hours of work arrangements and policies and procedures will be reviewed to reflect the principles of the Charter. The Commission will review its compliance with the Act ensuing that carers and carer representative groups will be consulted when making strategic policy and planning decisions that impact upon them.

David Glasgow
Commissioner
Family Responsibilities Commission
28 September 2010

▲ *Yazzmin Murphy, Sarah Ludwick, Shakara Frank, Shamuliah Ware and Lazariha Creek, enjoying the preparations for a traditional opening ceremony in the Hope Vale Community*

FRC

FAMILY
RESPONSIBILITIES
COMMISSION