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Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the Act provides for the establishment of the FR Board. Under section 117 of the Act, the FR Board has a mandate to: give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about the operation of the Commission; 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. Section 118 of the Act provides for the membership of the FR Board, which is endorsed by the Queensland Governor in Council. The FR Board consists of one person nominated by the Minister (chairperson of the FR Board), one person nominated by the Australian Government and one person nominated by the Institute. Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council for the term stated in the member's instrument of appointment.

Prior to the proclamation of amendments to the Act on 28 November 2014, section 123 of the Act stated that the FR Board must meet every three months. Subsequent to the proclamation the Act now states that the FR Board must meet every six months. The meeting may be held by using any technology available which will allow for efficient and effective communication, however, the Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the Board is comprised of two members. A full description of the meetings of the FR Board can be found at page 101.

Composition of the Board

The FR Board members as at 30 June 2015 were:

- | | |
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| Mr James Purtill | Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships as the Chair |
| Ms Liza Carroll | Associate Secretary, Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet |
| Mr Noel Pearson | Founder and Director of Strategy, Cape York Partnership as the Executive Chairman, representing the Cape York Institute. |

Executive Management Team

In the first half of the financial year the Commission's Executive Management Team (EMT) consisted of the Commissioner, the Registrar and the Executive Officer (Management). Following a restructure of the Commission in January 2015, a new EMT was formed and is comprised of the Commissioner, the Registrar/General Manager, the Client Manager and the Accountant. The EMT plays a critical role in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission by:

- providing value-based leadership whilst being a role model for innovation, teamwork and problem solving
- demonstrating and incorporating high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour
- ensuring transparency and accountability through effective decision-making and communication with all employees and service providers
- providing a clear future direction for the Commission and
- providing leadership and direction on:
 - issues relating to the ongoing financial and non-financial operations of the Commission and the performance of its governance structure and
 - the operation, performance and reporting of the Commission with regard to its obligations under the Act and other relevant legislation.

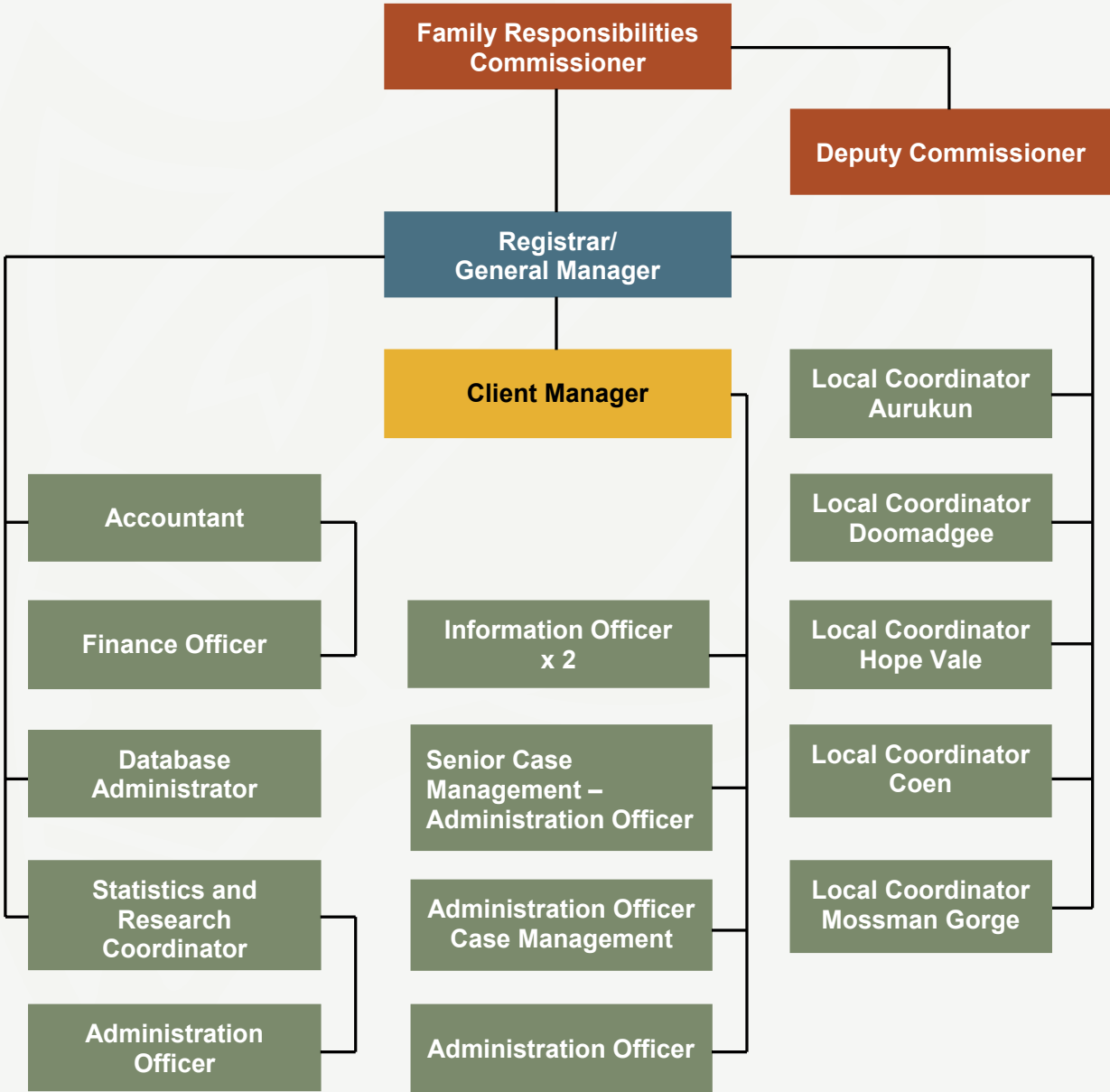
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Due to the small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commission’s operational performance. In addition the EMT oversees the operations of finance, information management, human resources and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2014-15 year.

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, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Each of the Commission’s remote community based offices has a Local Coordinator appointed to provide strategic, operational and administrative support to the Local Commissioners.





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Planning

The Commission has adopted a strategic plan which has enabled it to develop goals and strategies to fulfil the mandate of the Commission. These goals are consistent with current whole-of-government priorities, including targets set by COAG under NIRA and other key financial, socio-economic and demographic challenges identified through research and consultation. The strategic plan is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency of performance measures and that objectives adequately reflect the Commission's vision and purpose.

Participation in external governance groups

In addition to the internal governance arrangement of the Commission, the Commissioner and other delegated employees participated in several external governance groups:

- Program Office Group
- FRC/Centrelink Working Group
- FRC/CYP Working Group
- Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge Service Delivery Working Groups
- Regional Managers Coordination Network
- Mossman Gorge School Case Coordination meetings
- Cape York Welfare Reform Education Stream Working Committee.

Remuneration statement

As disclosed in the Commission's 2014-15 financial statements, executive remuneration of \$403,000 was received by the Commission's Chief Executive Officer (the Commissioner). The amount calculated as executive remuneration in the financial statements incorporates the direct and indirect remuneration including salary and allowances, superannuation and annual provision for long service leave.

Human resource management

At 30 June 2015 the Commission had an employee establishment of 17 full-time equivalent positions, including four positions servicing the regional communities. Fourteen positions are based in the Cairns Registry office (including one Local Coordinator servicing Coen and Mossman Gorge). Regional positions include one position (Local Coordinator) based in Aurukun servicing Aurukun, one position (Local Coordinator) based in Hope Vale servicing Hope Vale and one position (Local Coordinator) based in Doomadgee servicing Doomadgee. The Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are employed on a fee for service basis.

Since the establishment of the Commission employee and job classification levels have altered from time to time as a result of operational reviews. During this financial year the Commission has experienced a permanent separation rate of 29 percent, and a permanent retention rate of 75 percent. The retention rate reflects the number of employees who were with the Commission as at 1 July 2014, and who are still employed as at 30 June 2015. Both the separation and the retention rates were affected by a restructure of the Commission conducted during the December/January 2015 period. This restructure reduced the Commission's FTE positions from 20 in the 2013-14 year to 17 in the 2014-15 year.

The Commission promotes policies and activities to support a healthy work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements are actively accessed and employees are provided the opportunity to work



from home where appropriate, part-time work opportunities and hours of work arrangements including the opportunity for purchased leave. These flexible arrangements are also offered in order to assist in balancing work and carer roles where required.

Recruitment, selection and retention of employees

The Commission conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act 1996* and relevant Public Service Commission policies and directives.

During the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.

Professional development

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on a continual basis to ensure it actively works to restore local authority. Part of this professional development involves enhancing and expanding upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, government departments and agencies. The Local Commissioners attended a development week in Cairns commencing on 25 May 2015 during which they met with senior staff from several organisations who provide social and government services to the welfare reform communities including Cape York Partnership (Empowered Communities), the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, the Department of Human Services - Centrelink, DATSIP, delegates from the proposed Jail to Jobs program and delegates from the Cape York Land Council. Participation in the consultations and workshops allowed the participants to address common issues, review strategies and source solutions. Local Commissioners also attended at Lotus Glen Correctional Centre, Red Cross, Djarragun and Peace Lutheran Colleges and Quigley Street Night Shelter, each of which provide Indigenous health and support services to the communities. The last day of the development week comprised of specific training for the Local Commissioners in managing violent and potentially violent situations and resilience and self-care. A comprehensive summary of the development week can be found in this Annual Report entitled 'Local Commissioner Development Week'. Training was also provided to the Aurukun and Mossman Gorge Local Commissioners by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General in Youth Justice Conferencing, and by Queensland Health in motivational interviewing techniques.

The broader focus of the Commission's professional development program for employees is on skills development, career enhancement, and supporting a culture of ongoing learning through participation in internal workshops, on the job training and courses conducted by specialist external training providers. All Commission employees have been registered for the online iLearning courses provided by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. This online learning service provides training in Ethical Decision-Making, Harvard Manage Mentor management and executive development online courses including webinars for team leaders/supervisors/managers on a range of topics to support managers, a mentoring program for senior officers and managers, finance and procurement fundamentals and an Emerging Leaders Program which provides confidence and skills to build and develop effective teams. These are but a few of the training opportunities offered. To facilitate employees' development, each employee together with their manager signs a Performance Assessment and Professional Development Plan. The plan sets out identified learning activities, supports the development of competencies, professional skills and personal attributes, and is designed to identify and record knowledge and skills gaps together with learning objectives. The plans link in to the Commission's strategic and operational objectives and are reviewed on a six monthly basis. During 2014-15 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$26,698



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excluding travel costs. This investment provides a platform for the Commission to foster the development of new skills and to improve business processes within the Commission.

During 2014-15 the Commission organised a number of training programs and workshops to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve operations, internal administration and service delivery of the Commission. Training programs covered the key areas of:

- management, leadership and team building
- mediation skills
- taxation and payroll
- organisation/business tools workshop
- accredited test and tag training
- work safety in construction (white card)
- first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- managing violent and potentially violent situations
- resilience and self-care
- fire warden and trial evacuation
- defensive driving
- 4WD training
- Indigenous mental health
- Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct and Ethical Decision-Making.

The Commission is also committed to providing support to employees who undertake further education and to providing flexible work practices to enable employees to study whilst continuing to meet operational and client needs.

Under the Commission's Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) Policy financial assistance and leave arrangements are administered subject to Directive 9/13 Special Leave in an equitable manner, ensuring effective usage of learning and organisational development funds, and taking into consideration available resources. As at June 2015 there are five employees enrolled with various academic institutions for the current 2015 calendar year to study the following:

- Certificate III in Micro Business Operations
- Bachelor of Social Work
- Certificate IV in Community Development
- Bachelor of Arts Anthropology and Indigenous Studies
- Graduate Certificate of Forensic Mental Health.

Through the provision of high quality and targeted professional development the Commission seeks to not only enhance the skills and competencies of its employees and Local Commissioners, but to also provide effective and efficient client service.



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 agreement ensured the Commission complied with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, whilst providing a high level of security and support.

The Commission's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) system plays a vital role in supporting employees both in the Cairns registry office and regional offices. The Commission, in conjunction with CAA, has policies and network protocols in place to ensure all employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding ethical information access, transference, usage and management. The Commission's information and communication technology systems capture and retain information, preserve the integrity of information and also provide a high level of security and confidentiality.

A major focus this year has been a review of ICT systems. A major overhaul was completed that involved signing up with Telstra's private network, giving the Commission a more efficient, reliable and secure network. Telephone and mobile plans were reviewed and re-signed to allow for greater flexibility and economy, all workstations and portable computers were replaced and the CRM database and server are currently being reviewed for upgrade. The CRM database has been continually developed since 2008 to allow for better capture of client data and to improve the management of client records. A number of changes have been implemented to the functionality of the database to increase the efficiency of processes and provide more accurate performance data.

The Commission can report that no breaches of information security have occurred to date, and no records have been lost due to disaster or other occurrences.

The Commission complies with recordkeeping practices in accordance with section 141 of the Act, the *Public Records Act 2002*, Information Standard 40, Recordkeeping and Information Standard 31: Retention and Disposal of Public Records, through the service level agreement with CAA. Approximately 90 percent of Commission records are held in digital format.

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 and Code of Conduct

All employees of the Commission, with the exception of the Family Responsibilities Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Local Commissioners are employed under the *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*.

Commission employees are in the process of completing their annual Code of Conduct training via the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' iLearning site. The training incorporates the four ethics principles together with their associated values of integrity and impartiality, promoting the public good, commitment to the system of government and accountability and transparency. The Local Coordinators for the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge will be facilitating training for each Local Commissioner. New employees are provided with Code of Conduct and ethics training upon induction, and refresher training is conducted annually for all Commission employees.

To further assist Commission employees with ethical decision-making and in understanding the Code of Conduct, the Commission has created a supplementary policy document titled 'Workplace Policy'. This policy presents a broad framework for ethical behaviour, supports the Code and is consistent with the requirements of the *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* and relevant Public Service policies and directives. The Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy are both available in hard copy at



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all Commission premises and are located on our webpage for access to both the public and employees.

Alignment with the ethics principles is further achieved through the Commission's Strategic Plan which incorporates three objectives based on enhancing and strengthening socially responsible standards of behaviour both within the Commission and in the five welfare reform communities. Each of these objectives then forms the basis for employee Performance Assessment and Professional Development Plans to link ethics priorities with service delivery.

Public sector values

The Commission continues to structure its operations in accordance with the objects and principles of the *Family Responsibilities Act 2008* and the Queensland Public Service Values of: Customers first, ideas into action, unleash potential, be courageous and empower people. The Commission's Service Charter pledges the best service we can provide and to deliver outputs for the Queensland and State Governments that achieve the outcomes sought for the welfare reform communities. In doing so the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. Our Local Commissioners are well acquainted with their community and the ancestry and family history of their community members. Decisions are made with an understanding of where each client comes from and what has influenced their behaviour. The exercise of their authority under the Act is governed by this understanding. They are challenging the old norms in their communities every day, encouraging clients to cross the boundaries of their inappropriate social behaviours. To do so requires courage from the Local Commissioners and from Commission clients. The Local Commissioners are leading by example, trusting where their intuition demands consideration of the challenges faced by each individual and at times demanding action by imposing restrictions. With each decision they take a calculated risk on the strength and capacity of their community members, whilst empowering them to be responsible to themselves, their family and their community.

Risk management

The Commission's risk management framework establishes a mechanism to identify, assess and manage real or potential risks. The framework supports a positive risk minimisation and management culture within the Commission which focuses on strategic risks (risks which present as challenges to the Commission's strategic direction and vision), and operational risks (risks which present as challenges to the daily activities of the Commission in delivering its services). In applying the risk management principles the Commission has developed a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The framework of this plan incorporates five key elements – prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and review, and consists of a risk management and contingency plan, business impact analysis, incident response table and recovery plan. The plan states a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all employees to implement the BCP. Employees are individually responsible for contributing to the BCP and to the health and safety of others by reporting workplace injury, incidents, illness and hazards. Employees are also responsible for seeking to reduce the vulnerability of the Commission to internal and external events and influences that may impede achieving the goals of the Commission.

The Commission's BCP progresses from an integrated approach to managing all risks that impact on the achievement of the Commission's strategic and business objectives to reviewing and re-evaluating identified risks and reporting to the EMT regarding processes and recommendations.



External scrutiny

For the period 1 July 2014 to 26 March 2015 the Parliamentary Health and Community Services Committee had oversight responsibility for the Commission under the Parliament of *Queensland Act 2001*. In October 2014 the Committee released Report number 56 Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2014. The report recommended the following amendments to the Act be passed:

- amend the Act to exclude the sunset clause (s152) from the legislation
- amend the definition of welfare reform community area to an area prescribed under regulation (allowing communities to join welfare reform and also to exit welfare reform)
- amend the triggers for notifications to extend to a community resident convicted in the District or Supreme Courts or a child convicted in a court
- amend the disqualification provisions for Local Commissioners and
- amend the requirement for the FR Board to meet quarterly to every six months.

Further, the Committee also recommended that the Minister:

- ensure that information regarding the indicators and assessment methods used to prescribe a community as a welfare reform community area be published
- require DATSIP to develop and publish guidelines for consultation with proposed new welfare reform community areas and publish the outcomes of consultation with said communities
- ensure that information about the indicators and assessment methods to be used when considering whether a welfare reform community is ready to exit welfare reform be published.

On 14 October 2014 amendments to the Act were passed by the Queensland Parliament and the Act was proclaimed on 28 November 2014.

In November 2014 Report No 58, the Annual Report 2013-2014 of the Health and Community Services Committee was published. The report stated: “The committee considered that the FRC is satisfactorily performing its statutory functions and did not make any recommendations. The committee noted, however, that the key objectives of the FRC, that is to restore social norms, responsible behaviour and local authority in welfare reform communities, cannot be achieved through short-term initiatives. Rather, it requires a holistic approach and long-term government support to engender change, across years and generations, in a way that is acceptable to the communities”.

The 2014-15 year has seen the Commission work with a new State Government, Premier and Minister. Subsequently on 27 March 2015 the Finance and Administration Committee was granted oversight responsibility for the Commission. The committee will be responsible for examining Bills to consider policy, examining estimates, assessing the Commission’s accounts in regard to integrity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness of financial management and assessing whether the Commission is performing its legislative functions and meeting its obligations as a statutory body. The committee is set to conduct estimates hearings in August 2015.

On 3 July 2013 the Commissioner sought the assistance of the Queensland Public Service Commission to review and map the operations of the Commission and make recommendations on improvements in efficiencies (if any). Further discussions were held in late 2014. Whilst not yet finalised, the Commission continues to implement process improvements and is currently



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reviewing its broader strategic workforce planning, work practices, systems and processes to create greater efficiencies.

The Commission has also participated in the Public Service Commission’s Review of Statutory Appointments which, whilst not yet released, has a two-fold purpose:

- provide a consolidated overview of the range of CEO leadership positions across the Queensland public sector and
- critically analyse the appointment frameworks, accountability, independence and performance mechanisms for certain CEO positions within the context of the Westminster system of government and make recommendation as to the appropriateness and rationale of differences between them.

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 whilst utilising ethics in all decision-making. Employees are made aware of their ongoing responsibilities, duty of care and requirements under the core legislation governing the Commission as published through Commission policies, protocols and guidelines which are readily available to employees on the intranet. During the year the Commission has continued refining its strategies and processes to ensure its operations are effective and the strategic direction is maintained. The following policies and guidelines were revised to ensure efficiencies of process:

Policy	Revision Date
Financial Delegation Guidelines	July 2014
Discipline in the Workplace – a Guide for Management and Employees	September 2014
Service Charter	October 2014
Employee Complaints Management Policy	January 2015
External Complaints Management Policy	January 2015
Business Continuity Plan	February 2015
Rural and Remote Area Incentive Policy	February 2015
Study and Research Assistance Policy	February 2015
Complaints Involving Corrupt Conduct by the FRC Commissioner	March 2015
Workplace Health and Safety Policy	May 2015



Commission policies are required to be read and understood as part of the Commission induction process and a register must be signed acknowledging an understanding of the policies. The Commission complies with the following legislative requirements in performing its functions:

- *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (the Act)*
- *Public Service Act (Qld) 2008*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
- *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*
- *Public Records Act 2002.*

Publication of information on line

For information regarding consultancies, international travel, corporate social responsibility including waste management and recycling policies, carbon emissions, reconciliation, right to information and information privacy, complaints management, corporate services and work health and safety refer to the Additional published information under Right to Information on the Commission's website at <http://www.frcq.org.au> and the Queensland Government Open Data website at <https://data.qld.gov.au>.

Publications by the Commission during 2014-15

1. Annual Report 2013-14
2. Quarterly Performance Report 24
3. Quarterly Performance Report 25
4. Quarterly Performance Report 26

All publications are available on the Family Responsibilities Commission's website:
<http://www.frcq.org.au>.