



REGISTRAR'S YEAR IN REVIEW

From the desk of the Registrar

Operations

As at July 2018, the Commission will have been operating in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge for 10 years, and in Doomadgee for four years. Although every fiscal year for the Commission has proven eventful in one aspect or another, as demonstrated in our previous Annual Reports, during this last year the Commission has felt the impact of a review on the future of Welfare Reform and the Commission by both the Australian and State Governments. Despite that uncertainty, the Commission has continued its operations in each community in a positive way, encouraging Local Commissioners and community members alike to work toward a better future. We have sought to identify our key strengths and weaknesses in order to seek a potential future path. We have conducted internal analyses of our statistics and provided them to the Australian and State Governments in order to inform the reviews of Welfare Reform and income management which are currently underway. As promised in last year's Registrar's report, we have strived this year to engender trust and confidence in the potential of Welfare Reform to transform Indigenous communities, and we have done so whilst providing fair, empathetic and efficient services.

Aside from the uncertain future which the Local Commissioners and staff now face, we are also looking to a change of leadership at the end of the 2018 calendar year with the retirement of Commissioner David Glasgow. Bearing all these changes in mind, our responsibility is to ensure that the next phase entered into, whatever form that may take, continues to promote and nurture the advancements achieved in the restoration of Indigenous authority and communal responsibility in the decade since the commencement of the Commission in 2008.

Policy

As an adjunct to the completion of the Commission's Code of Conduct training in July 2017, and in order to support high standards of professional conduct and honest and ethical business practices within the Commission all employees completed fraud and corruption training through the then Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors iLearn program in November 2017.

Further significant policy work was carried out this year with the review of the External and Internal Complaints Management policies, Discipline in the Workplace Policy, Privacy Policy, Information Sharing Protocol, Travel Policy, Service Charter, Induction Manual and Local Commissioner Handbook and Conference Guidelines. In addition, to comply with the requirements of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*, a new Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure was drafted and distributed to staff.

Significant events

On 21 December 2017 the Governor in Council under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* approved various appointments as follows:

- David Glasgow as the FRC Commissioner for the period 2 January 2018 to 31 July 2018 and
- Rodney Curtin as the Deputy Commissioner for the period 2 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

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In addition, the following Local Commissioners were re-appointed for the period 2 January 2018 to 31 December 2018:

- Edgar Kerindun, Vera Koomeeta, Doris Poonkamelya, Dorothy Pootchemunka and Ada Woolla as Aurukun Commissioners
- Elaine Liddy, Maureen Liddy, Alison Liddy, May Kepple, Peter Peter and Garry Port as Coen Commissioners
- Elaine Cairns, Guy Douglas, Karen Jupiter, Christopher Logan, Eleanor Logan and Kaylene O'Keefe as Doomadgee Commissioners
- Erica Deeral, Victor Gibson, Doreen Hart, Cheryl Cannon and Selina Bowen as Hope Vale Commissioners and
- Karen Gibson, Karen Shuan and Loretta Spratt as Mossman Gorge Commissioners.

Subsequent to the above appointments, Commissioner Glasgow's appointment was extended in July 2018 to 31 December 2018, and Keri Tamwoy commenced her appointment as an Aurukun Commissioner on 2 January 2018 for the period to 31 December 2018. Commissioner Tamwoy is a qualified mediator and is currently running the mediation program in Aurukun. This program has been a huge success in bringing families together to resolve issues without resorting to violence. Her current role as mediator is where her passion lies as she is extremely committed to supporting the Wik people of Aurukun and empowering them to grow and improve their community into the future. We look forward to the additional contribution Keri Tamwoy will make as a Local Commissioner in Aurukun.

The Commission's annual School Awards ceremonies were conducted in December in each of the five communities. Prizes were awarded for attendance achievements and included certificates, medals and in some cases gift vouchers. Each year the Local Commissioners present the awards to provide positive recognition and support for those students (and their families) who regularly attend school, and also to provide an incentive for those students who wish to improve their school attendance.

The Commission is committed to providing the public with data from across all sections of its operations for the benefit of all Queenslanders and particularly the State and Australian Governments. In fulfilling this purpose, the Commission's intention is to support and encourage innovation in the use of information. As part of this commitment the Commission has added the following information to its Quarterly and Annual Reports for the benefit of its readers:

- Domestic violence statistics including:
 - the location of courts issuing within jurisdiction domestic violence breach (DVB) and domestic violence order (DVO) notices and the numbers from each location for the quarter
 - numbers of conferences held for domestic violence (DV) related matters per community by quarter
 - referrals made to service providers for DV related matters for the quarter and
 - the number of CIM Orders issued for DV related matters for the quarter
- Statistics informing on the number of times a client has been placed on CIM inclusive of original orders and alterations by community from 1 July 2008.



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January commenced with our annual Local Coordinator Conference conducted in the week commencing 15 January. The Local Coordinators were asked to present to the conference reports on: their communities together with school attendance statistics; a report from their local school principal detailing issues affecting their school along with school priorities for the 2018 school year; and how the FRC could work with the schools to improve attendance. Strategies were set for the 2018 school year to assist in improving school attendance and assist in the transition of students to boarding schools which included, amongst other strategies, assisting with inductions in community, educating service providers and the community on the role of the FRC, maintaining visibility at schools and nurturing relationships with teachers, principals and the community.

The extension in June 2017 of income management for Cape York to 30 June 2019 included an agreement between the Honourable Alan Tudge MP and the opposition to undertake a review of income management in Cape York. DSS was tasked with this undertaking and the Commission has been liaising with DSS in the second half of this year to provide FRC statistics to inform the review, and to capture Local Commissioner views on the use of income management. DSS consulted with the Local Commissioners at their Local Commissioner Development week conducted in May 2018. In light of this review, our Senior Advisor (Statistics and Research) has undertaken some quantitative and qualitative data research which we hope will provide analytical value on the use of income management in the Cape York communities from 2008 and in Doomadgee from 2016.

Work commenced in March to initiate the community consultations which will inform State and Australian Government decisions on the future of Welfare Reform and the Commission. On 21 March the community of Mossman Gorge was the first of the welfare reform communities to be visited by the consultation team comprising of DPMC, DATSIP and the Institute. Further consultations were held with Hope Vale, Aurukun, Doomadgee and concluded with Coen on 29 and 30 May. The Commission looks forward to the DATSIP report and findings of the consultations in the near future. A brief outline of the Local Commissioner consultations can be found on page 32.

In May the annual Local Commissioner Development week was held with 23 Local Commissioners, Local Coordinators and registry staff attending. From Local Commissioner feedback, the week was a great success and provided opportunities for collaborative learning, consolidation of relationships and opportunities for discussion and interactive dialogue on the future of the Commission. A full report on the 2018 Local Commissioner Development Week can be found on page 54.

The Commission's operational focus this year has been in two particular areas: increasing client attendance at conference; and supporting Local Commissioners to conduct conferences without the assistance of Commissioner Glasgow and Deputy Commissioner Curtin. Local Commissioners have been sitting independently in conference for the majority of this year. Statistics for the period 1 July 2017 to the end of June 2018 are provided under the Challenges and Outlook section on page 74.

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The Commission has been advised that, in a letter received in March by DATSIP from DPMC, Australian Government funding for Commission operations has been approved for the period 1 July to 31 December 2018. It is anticipated that a formal variation to the existing memorandum of understanding will be prepared and executed in the near future.

Staffing

We have a dedicated group who I would like to acknowledge. First and foremost is Commissioner David Glasgow. Commissioner Glasgow has been not only the catalyst for me taking on the role of Registrar, but he has been a steady influence on me; continually encouraging me and trusting in my ability to support his efforts. Deputy Commissioner Curtin has likewise provided myself and the Registry with his unconditional support, and his enthusiasm and dedication to improving Doomadgee school attendance has seen positive and solid results. I would like to thank all the staff who have continued to provide their expertise to the Commission in these uncertain times. They have a faith in, and commitment to what the Commission represents and what it seeks to achieve; to support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour and local authority, and to assist community members to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their communities and the individuals and families of their communities.

Maxine McLeod
Registrar



Commissioner Glasgow with the registry staff