



Commissioner Williams' Message

In 2019-20 the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) had an intensive focus on its frontline operations to enable a better response to the emerging trends and the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

I am pleased to present the Family Responsibilities Commission's Annual Report for 2019-20. My appointment as Commissioner took effect on 2 September 2019 upon the retirement of the FRC's inaugural Commissioner, David Glasgow. I acknowledge his tremendous contribution to the FRC and to those working within it who have benefited from his guidance, direction and friendship.

On 12 December 2019 the FRC welcomed an executed Memorandum of Understanding between the Australian and Queensland Governments confirming funding for the operation of the Commission until 30 June 2021. The certainty provided to the FRC through this funding commitment has afforded the Commission an opportunity to reset its course to better meet the significant and complex needs of its clients.

The implementation of business and operational strategies and a realignment of the organisation structure has led to improved efficiencies and client outcomes. New practice directions and guidelines were developed to enhance Local Commissioners' conferencing techniques. The focus remains on early intervention to support positive changes in client behaviour. Local Commissioners are making appropriate use of referral pathways, utilising community support services available in each community and strengthening clients' resilience to face the challenges they experience.

Client referrals to support services for the financial year have increased by 396.3 percent from the previous reporting period. This result is indicative of the increased capability of Local Commissioners to conference clients with complex behaviours and apply a more holistic approach, using support services in conjunction with income management to encourage improved social behaviour.

Local Commissioners continue to use Conditional Income Management (CIM) as a decision of last resort. The 2019-20 reporting period has seen a growing number of clients placed on a case plan and referred to a support service concurrent with a CIM. This clearly demonstrates income management is delivered within a highly targeted and flexible approach nuanced to the client's circumstances. In this way, CIM is utilised as a tool to support people and children at risk, promote socially responsible choices, and as an incentive to meet individual and community obligations.

The Commission met several large challenges this year commencing with major unrest in Aurukun in January 2020, followed by the declared COVID-19 pandemic. A full report of each, together with the FRC's response can be found on pages 45 to 46. The primary aim of the FRC's response in both cases was to ensure continued engagement with and support for FRC clients. As an organisation we have learnt the value of agility in meeting these challenges and have utilised the lessons learnt in forward planning.

I would like to especially thank Registrar Maxine McLeod, Executive Officer (Finance) Tracey Paterson and Senior Advisor (Statistics and Research) Michelle Synott for their stellar efforts in the development and publication of this annual report.

Finally, I wish to sincerely thank the hardworking staff of the FRC and Local Commissioners for their commitment and dedication.

Tammy Williams
Family Responsibilities Commissioner