

Family Responsibilities Commission

*Report to the Family Responsibilities Board and
the Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Partnerships*

Quarterly Report

No. 8

April 2010 to June 2010



*Report prepared by the Family Responsibilities Commission under the leadership of
Commissioner David Glasgow*

Executive Summary

The Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission) commenced operation on 1 July 2008 and has concluded its second year of operation. The focus of the first year of operation was the comprehensive establishment of the Commission which included infrastructure as well as the commencement of regular conferencing schedules in each of the communities. In its second year of operation the Commission has focussed on the consolidation of administrative processes and in quarter eight concentrated on the development of an intensive case management model that will be deployed in the latter half of 2010.

The Commission has continued conferencing in accordance with its sittings calendar in quarter eight with only minor changes made, as necessary. Over the past quarter 436 conferences were held as compared against quarter seven (333). The increase in the number of conferences held is attributed to the review of many clients currently on case plans. Seven hundred and forty-one agency notifications were received that were within the Commission's jurisdiction and was only marginally less than last quarter (786). Monitoring and case management of the clients was maintained with the Commission currently case managing 496 clients. In quarter eight the Commission's case management load reduced by 86 which is attributed to client's case plans coming to an end.

Local Commissioners continued their tireless efforts in relation to both the on-going sittings of the Commission as well as meeting many demands for interactions with other agencies. Training was conducted in both Justice of the Peace (Qualified and Magistrates Court) and mediation throughout this quarter with the balance to be delivered over the second half of 2010. The training and skills development of Local Commissioners will continue throughout the life of the CYWR trial.

The Ending Family Violence Program commenced operation in the welfare reform communities in this quarter as a result of funding received in the early part of 2010. The Commission and Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) collaborated on the delivery of this program and in this past quarter several programs have been delivered. Of those programs delivered, every participant completed the three day program. The Commission will work with Queensland Corrective Services on strategies to increase up take of the program over the next year to ensure that the needs of the Commission, clients and community members are met. The Commission would like to acknowledge and thank the staff of Queensland Corrective Services for their commitment and dedication to the delivery of this program.

Decreases in school attendance were experienced across all four communities in term 2, 2010 as compared against term 2, 2009. The Commission has been advised that even though Aurukun experienced a 5.5 percentage point decrease more children are attending school, but due to the reporting parameters established under the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* many children are arriving late to school which results in an agency notification being submitted to the Commission. It highlights that further work needs to be done with parents to ensure that their children arrive at school on time. Hope Vale experienced a 3.4 percentage point decrease in attendance while Coen and Mossman Gorge experienced small decreases of 1.4 and 2.5 percentage point respectively. Due to the size of the schools these decreases are not of major concern. In addition, changes with record keeping practices over time may impact on the ability to compare school attendance across years.

The implementation of the intensive case management model over the coming quarters will be a feature of the work of the Commission and its staff. This will require commitment and concerted efforts of all government agencies and non-government services to ensure the individual needs of the Commission's clients and their families are met. The Commission will report on the progress of this model in coming reports.

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Abbreviations

ACMs	Attendance Case Managers
ACMF	Attendance Case Management Framework
ATODS	Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
CIM	Conditional Income Management
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform
DET	Department of Education and Training
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
FIM	Family Income Management
FR Board	Family Responsibilities Board
IT	Information Technology
TSS	Transition Support Services
VIM	Voluntary Income Management
WBC	Wellbeing Centre
Also:	Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (the Institute)
	Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)
	Mr David Glasgow, Family Responsibilities Commissioner (the Commissioner)
	<i>Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008</i> (the Act)

Family Responsibilities Commission

Cape York Welfare Reforms

Report to 30 June 2010

1. Context

Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) envisages a process of moving people from passive welfare dependence to engagement in the real economy. The process of this transition includes increasing individual responsibility through engagement in labour markets (i.e. real jobs), increasing responsible tenancy and/or home ownership and limiting the role of governments (federal, state and local) in people's lives to align with that provided by governments in mainstream Australia.

Welfare Reform is also about social development. The loss of traditional cultural values and practices has adversely impacted on the social development of Cape York communities (Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge). CYWR aims to rebuild basic social norms that are the fabric of any society, such as sending children to school, abiding by the law and taking care of one's family or house.

A key plank of CYWR was the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission). The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act) was passed in the Queensland Parliament on 13 March 2008 and sets out the statutory obligations of the relevant Queensland departments to notify the Commission where a parent/carer is not meeting pre-determined obligations. For example:

- The Department of Education and Training (DET) 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. Upon determination of jurisdiction, the matter is then referred to the Local Commissioners for a decision about whether to order the person to attend a conference.

When a conference is convened the client may be encouraged to enter into a Family Responsibility Agreement (FRA), or an order may be made to refer the person to community support services. The matter is then case managed by the Commission for the period of the order/agreement. Where a person does not comply, Show Cause proceedings are initiated and the client is ordered to attend before the Commission to explain reasons for non compliance and if necessary an order for Conditional Income Management (CIM) may be made.

2. Partners / Service Providers

The Commission has been in operation for a period of two years at the time of this report and during this time has conducted a significant number of conferences with clients brought to the attention of the Commission through the submission of agency notifications. Staff of the Commission have developed strong working relationships with the agencies and community support service providers both in the communities and regionally in the past two years and will continue to build upon those relationships throughout the life of the trial.

As a result of attendance at a conference, clients may either enter into agreements or be directed to attend relevant community support services such as the Wellbeing Centres (WBCs) to address alcohol and/or drug misuse, gambling, parenting or social health related issues, Parenting Programs to assist in good parenting practices, Family Income Management (FIM) to assist with budgeting and meeting priority needs of individuals and families, or school Attendance Case Managers (ACMs) to ensure children attend school. Although not all services are fully functional in the community the Commission is hopeful that providers will find the impetus to place services on the ground as soon as possible, as two years has elapsed since the commencement of the trial.

Whilst the Commission is aware of the many limitations and challenges experienced by service providers operating in the four welfare reform communities, the release of an intended suite of referral services and programs for clients still remains incomplete. The lack of these services and programs causes frustration to the Commissioners and inhibits their ability to provide referrals to the services that clients require to address the issues affecting their lives. There continues to be capacity and capability constraints on the primary service providers due to staff turnover, absence of staff living and integrating into the community and resource limitations as advised by the service providers. The Commission continues to support service providers and the process of change by providing training, briefings, procedures and assistance whenever requested and operationally possible.

Where a client enters into an agreement or a direction is made, as mentioned above, a case plan is developed. The case plan may include a number of referrals to community support services. Service providers are required to report in writing to the Commission by the fifth day of each month, to advise if the client has attended and engaged with the provider and the progress they are making in their case plans.

As a result of the progress reports received, a client's case is assessed to establish whether they are meeting their obligations under the agreement or order. Additional information is sought from partner agencies and service providers with local knowledge also gathered to provide a firm basis for decisions to be made relating to the best course of action for the client. Where appropriate, recommendations for Show Cause proceedings or case reviews are initiated. The complexity of client obligations requires comprehensive information sharing and cooperation between the Commission, service providers and associated agencies to ensure clients can realistically meet the requirements of their case plan.

A total of 83 referrals to community support services were made in quarter eight relating to 53 individuals. The reduction in referrals as compared against quarter seven (170) is due to the capacity issues of the service providers as well as a significant number of clients' matters being reviewed thereby increasing the number of conferences held. Service providers are relied upon to capture the attendance, engagement and progress of clients to assist the Commission in extending further case plan options, personal responsibility actions and, if necessary, CIM orders. The lack of

timely and accurate Monthly Progress Reports has limited client case management and the ability of the Commission to initiate Show Cause action and reviews on the clients. The Commission has implemented a streamlined reporting mechanism for service providers, reducing the previous cumbersome and repetitive collection and collation of data. The Commission now uploads client data from service providers, via electronic spreadsheets rather than duplicating data entry by both organisations.

As at 30 June 2010, 496 clients were being case managed which required monthly progress reports to be submitted by service providers. This compares against the 582 clients that were being case managed in quarter seven. The decrease in the number of clients case managed is attributed to clients' case plans coming to an end.

The Commission has identified the need to assist those clients not progressing with service providers, or within the expectations of the Commissioners to improve family lives, through personal responsibility actions. In addition, the Commission is developing an Intensive Case Management Model for selected individuals and families requiring assistance and support to navigate services and agencies and access the personal assistance they require. The methodology and model will be a collaboration between the Commissioners, Local Coordinators and a Case Management team to target clients and assist in the restoration of clients taking primary responsibility for their families.

The Commission and the Department of Community Safety (Queensland Corrective Services) successfully commenced the Ending Family Violence Program in all four of the communities this quarter. Two Local Coordinators have been trained as facilitators and have each co-facilitated courses. Attendees have comprised both Commission clients on case plans and Probation and Parole clients. Queensland Corrective Services advised that all of the attendees completed the three day program. The Commission will work with Probation and Parole to increase uptake of this program to ensure the needs of our respective clients, their families and the communities are met. The program provides education and self awareness training in many aspects of domestic and interpersonal violence, repeat offending and associated triggers, and has assisted in reducing the number of number of clients referred to the Wellbeing Centres in Aurukun and Hope Vale. The Commission would like to acknowledge and thank the staff of Queensland Corrective Services for their commitment to the delivery of this program on a regular basis in each of the four communities.

The Wellbeing Centres have advised of severe staff shortages in Aurukun this quarter and the Commission has sought alternative referral options to reduce workloads. The Commission continues to encourage 'Strong Spirit, Strong Mind' (Wawu Buuthan) currently being delivered at the Hope Vale Wellbeing Centre and encourages the use of group programs to assist with workload issues. Whilst this option is considered a trial it is hoped with the provision of informative brochures for the community, information sharing sessions and day and night sessions being available, individuals will self refer and other agencies will be encouraged to consider this program as an option for their clients.

Local Commissioners have been disappointed to discover some areas of limited services provided by the Wellbeing Centres, these being primarily focussed on drug and alcohol counselling in the first instance. A number of areas of concern have been identified by the Commissioners with regard to method of service delivery to its clients, which affects the Commissions ability to case manage effectively. These concerns have been articulated to the WBCs, and the Commission will continue to work through the Regional Operations Centre (ROC) with Department of Health and Ageing and WBCs to resolve these issues for the benefit of clients.

FIM and ACM continued to experience resourcing challenges. This required the induction of new staff on a regular basis, which limited consistent and quality service provision on the ground, although this is not to discount the dedication and commitment of individual staff members. FIM management has advised the Commission of new initiatives and that a client service progression program will soon be introduced, which the Commission eagerly awaits. Clients advise once a budget is established with FIM, there is little further financial interaction and only the maintenance of the budget is required. The Commission hopes progress on financial literacy education will aid clients and community members to long term financially sustainable outcomes. The FIM project has advised it is focused on ongoing targeted interaction with clients in its work towards building financial capacity across communities.

The Commission has identified the improvements in school attendance levels in Aurukun and Hope Vale over the past two years may have reached a ceiling that cannot be improved upon without a consolidated and coordinated approach from service providers and government agencies. A number of children eligible for boarding school (including those who attend Cooktown High School) have slipped through current systems due to a myriad of social and environmental factors which is preventing further improvements in school attendance rates. The Commission has seen the pivotal role Transition Support Services (TSS), DET has played in the CYWR communities in engaging children and families to ensure children achieve secondary education. The Commission understands that an evaluation of the TSS for consideration by DET is currently being finalised and would strongly encourage DET ensures that ongoing funding is adequate for service delivery. Without the current and continued resource and personnel commitment of TSS along with Abstudy, DET and School Attendance Case Managers, the children of the Cape York communities will fail to enter secondary education and complete senior certificate levels.

Commissioners have also identified a significant number of families that have chronically truant children and despite the efforts of parents the children do not attend school. Some families have attended conferences up to eight times to discuss with the Commissioners strategies to address the truancy. Commissioners continually seek referral options for parents to address possible barriers to school attendance, but are frustrated by the lack of commitment and resources available to children. Specialised services such as Child and Youth Mental Health Remote Services are limited in capacity, cannot be a constant presence in community and have advised they are unable to take direct referrals from the Commission. The Commission is hopeful the eagerly awaited school nurse in Aurukun and Coen, as part of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy initiative, will facilitate direct referrals to Queensland Health and associated child services such as the Deadly Ears program. Commissioners are keen to work with DET, Queensland Health and the Attendance Case Managers to assist in consulting with these children and their parents.

The Commission has been advised of further delays in the commencement of the Parenting Programs in Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and the transition of the current program in Aurukun to the same service provider. The lack of a parenting program in the communities significantly impacts on referral options and the possibility of clients receiving parenting education, support and encouragement. The WBCs do not currently provide parenting programs but do have some capacity for family counselling.

The Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) and the Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian visited Aurukun in this quarter and held a foster care recruitment forum. Commissioners attended and encouraged suitable community members to apply. The recruitment of suitable foster carers will prevent the removal of children from community in some instances and provide safe environments for children to visit community and engage in culture, tradition and family.

The Commission continues to monitor and identify gaps in service delivery, coordination and cooperation between government agencies, service providers and non-government organisations in each of the communities. The development of the capacity within the Commission to offer intensive case management of clients, assisting agencies and community members to ensure boarding school enrolments increase, addressing chronic truancy and referrals to new agencies and service providers, where appropriate, will be a feature of case management in the coming year.

3. Business Operations

Operational

In meeting obligations under Part 3 of the Act, the Registry commenced operation on 1 July 2008 with a central Registry office established in Cairns and local Registry offices operating in each of the four CYWR communities.

The Registry is managed by the Registrar, with a further 15 Cairns based administrative staff who provide corporate and operational support to the Commissioner and Local Commissioners. Additional temporary staff having been engaged to provide further administrative assistance, as required, mainly to assist with the implementation of the new client database and client conferencing preparation.

Operational implementation of the new Client Relationship Management database continued throughout this quarter with staff being trained on its capabilities and streamlining operational processes to ensure synergy with the new system. The new CRM database became operational in quarter seven and work will continue in the coming months to finalise deployment and enhancement of all capabilities of the database such as case management and management and statistical reporting.

Financial

The total budgeted funding inflows for this trial project are \$14.603M. This funding consists of a Commonwealth Government grant of \$3.5M received in 2007-08, \$9.374M allocated under administered funding through the Department of Communities by the Queensland Government, supplementary funding of \$1.327M endorsed by the Family Responsibilities Board for additional staffing and Commissioner training and projected and actual interest on our operating bank account of \$0.402M until the expiry of the Act on 1 January 2012.

Income:

- Income received by the Commission for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 totalled \$3.127M. This includes Queensland Government funding of \$2.57M for the full financial year to 30 June 2010, \$0.114M in funding received in quarter seven from the CYWR Service Procurement Fund to offset the annual 2009-10 salary and on-costs for the Principal Case Manager's position, \$0.338M received in quarter eight from the CYWR Service Procurement Fund for Local Commissioner training and additional staffing, \$0.101M in interest, and \$0.004M in cost recoveries.
- Surplus funds accumulated and carried forward are \$2.181M as at the 30 June 2010 compared with 2008-09 (\$3.153M) and 2007-08 (\$3.777M) financial years.

Expenditure:

- Expenditure for the period 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2010 was \$1.162M (Table 1). The Commissions annual expenditure for 2009-10 was \$4.099M. This amount of quarterly and annual expenditure is within the Commissions budgeted expenditure forecasts for 2009-10 as stated in the projected expenditure for 2009-10 of \$4.116M, as disclosed in the Commission's 2010-11 Service Delivery Statements.

In referring to Graph 1 salaries and recruitment costs (49.1 percent), operating costs (1.6 percent), information technology (IT) costs (14.7 percent), property costs (4.7 percent), depreciation and amortisation (5 percent), vehicles costs (2.8 percent), Local Commissioner fees

(7.6 percent) and airfare and accommodation costs (12.6 percent) all represent 98.1 percent of total expenditure in quarter eight. This reflects the impact of accounting accruals and adjustments, ongoing staffing, increased operating costs, ongoing IT service fees and IT development, travel and vehicle maintenance and running costs. Expenditure variances from quarter seven to quarter eight are attributed to:

- Salaries and recruitment - salaries and on-costs increased by \$127K due to an increased annual FBT payment (\$38K), staff and Local Commissioner training (\$48K) and temporary staffing to assist the transition to the client database (\$32K).
- IT Costs – increased by \$101K due to delayed invoicing by the Commissions IT service provider the Corporate Administration Agency, Cape York Digital Network (CYDN) and Centre for Information Technology and Electronic Communication (CITEC) for services.
- Airfares and accommodation – staff related travel and accommodation increased by \$127K due to increased use of charter aircraft, delays in the allocation of air travel costs and associated accounting accrual expense transfers associated with the acquittal of corporate cards.
- Local Commissioner fees – increase of \$68K which reflects the accounting adjustment of Local Commissioner fees to the correct account code as Local Commissioners from Aurukun and Coen elected to have their payments taxed by the Commission.
- Property costs – increased by \$2K as a result of Hope Vale rental costs being invoiced by the Department of Health and the accrual of Aurukun office service charges, which are yet to be fully negotiated with and subsequently invoiced by the Aurukun Shire Council.
- Vehicle costs – increased by \$7K due to the hire of an additional automatic vehicle for the Aurukun Local Coordinator and increased operating costs for repairs of damage, tyre replacement and maintenance of vehicles.
- Telecommunications – increased \$8K due to the increased mobile phone charges in the quarter.
- Operating costs – decreased by \$99K as a result of the capitalisation of database development and office refurbishments costs.
- Depreciation and amortisation increased by \$59K as a result of the capitalisation of office refurbishment and database development costs.
- Consultants – decreased by \$50K due to capitalised costs associated with the development of the Commission's client database. These costs were be capitalised in quarter eight.

Commission staff worked closely with the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) on the Commission's 2009-10 audit and have assisted with the preparation of the 2009-10 Financial Statements. The QAO identified several corrections listed below to the Commission's financial reporting in 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10. To correct the reporting of these items, the Commissions 2009-10 financial statements will consist of three comparative columns to disclose these changes in the accounting of these items below:

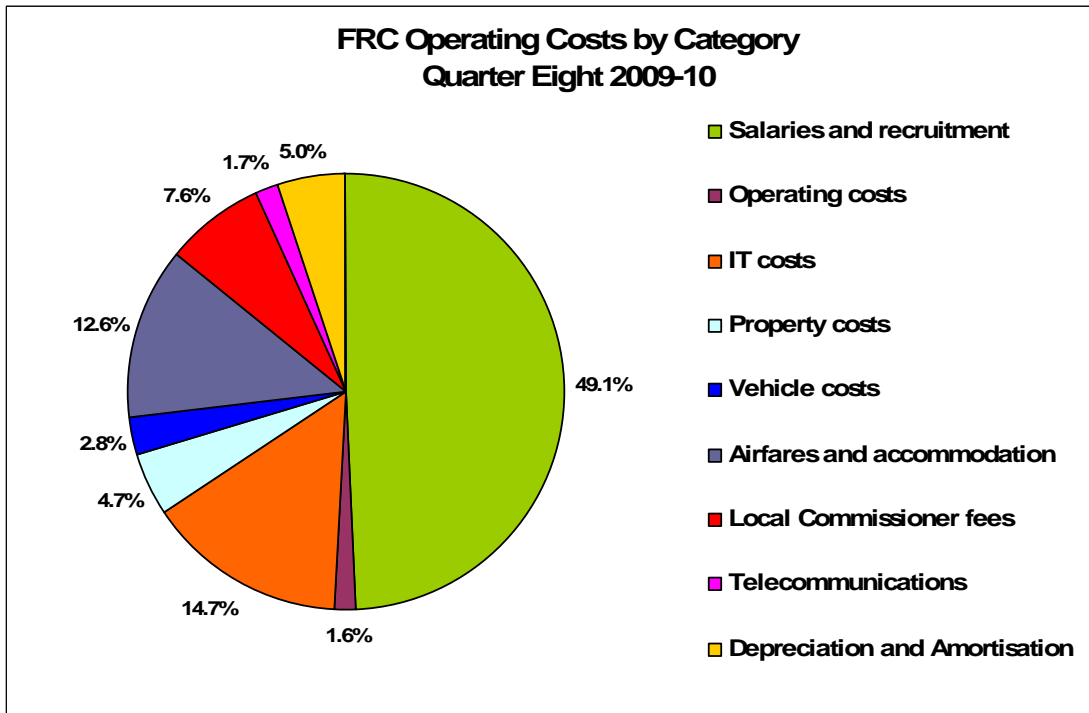
1. A Commonwealth grant of \$3.5M received in the 2007-08 financial year was classified as a reciprocal grant and brought to account as unearned revenue in 2007-08. In 2008-09, \$1.0M of this was brought to account as revenue. The grant should have been initially classified as non reciprocal and recognised as revenue in 2007-08. The result of this error is an understatement of income and the operating result of \$3.5M in 2007-08, and an overstatement of income and the operating result of \$1.0M in 2008-09. This also resulted in errors in the balance sheet, with current liabilities (unearned revenue) being overstated and equity understated by \$3.5M in 2007-08 and \$2.5M in 2008-09, respectively.
2. Funding of \$96K 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.

3. Intangibles work in progress in the 2008-09 financial year included scoping expenses of \$17K. These expenses should not have been capitalised. The result of this error is an understatement of expenses and overstatement of the operating result of \$17K, and an overstatement of intangibles work in progress in 2008-09.

Expenditure	Total Expenditure Qtr7	Total Expenditure Qtr8	Total Expenditure Variance Qtr7 to Qtr 8
Salaries and recruitment	449,656.25	576,660.95	127,004.70
IT costs	71,440.81	172,595.32	101,154.51
Airfares and accommodation	21,621.31	148,311.93	126,690.62
Local Commissioner fees	20,566.81	88,680.53	68,113.72
Property costs	53,316.38	55,527.89	2,211.51
Vehicle costs	27,001.97	33,430.58	6,428.61
Telecommunications	12,041.59	19,615.79	7,574.20
Operating costs	118,644.08	19,340.80	-99,303.28
Depreciation and Amortisation	0.00	59,230.55	59,230.55
Grants Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
Consultants	39,276.60	-10,928.51	-50,205.11
Total Expenditure	\$813,565.80	\$1,162,465.83	\$348,900.03

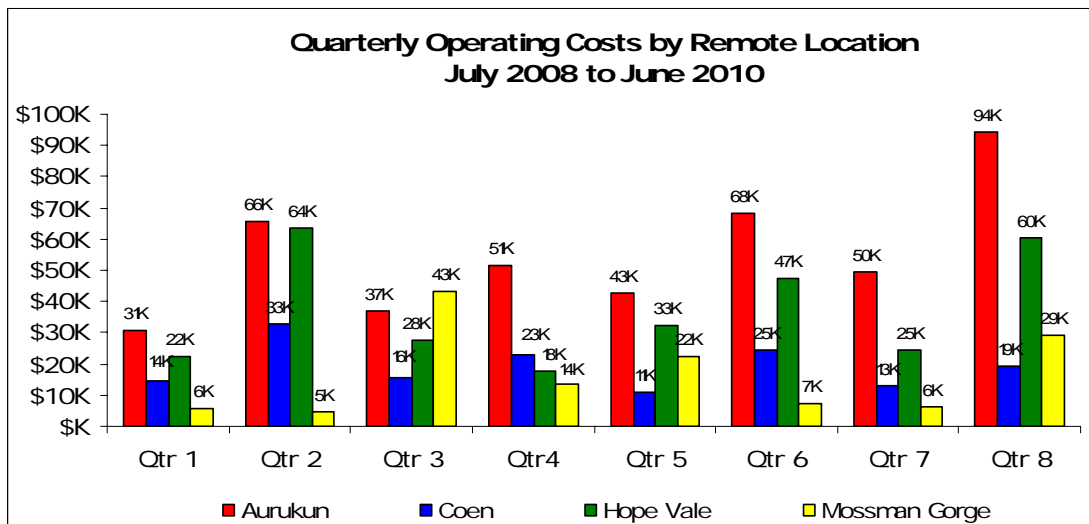
Table 1: Unaudited YTD expenditure including variations between quarter seven and quarter eight

The Commission's total quarter eight 2009-10 operating costs by categories and by percentage of total expenditure is represented in the graph below:



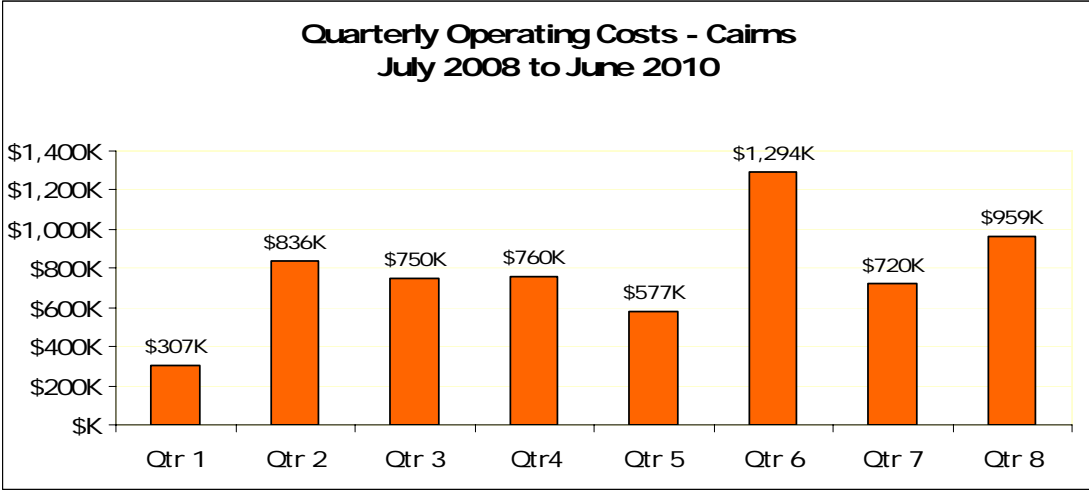
Graph 1: Total FRC Operating costs 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2010

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. These figures include Local Commissioners' fees for 2009-10 (quarters five to eight), totalling \$229K.



Graph 2: Operating costs by remote location 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

Cairns office operational costs (Graph 3) in quarter eight are compared to previous levels of quarterly expenditure incurred during the life of the project.



Graph 3: Quarterly operating costs Cairns 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

4. Activities / Achievements

Intake and Assessment Phase

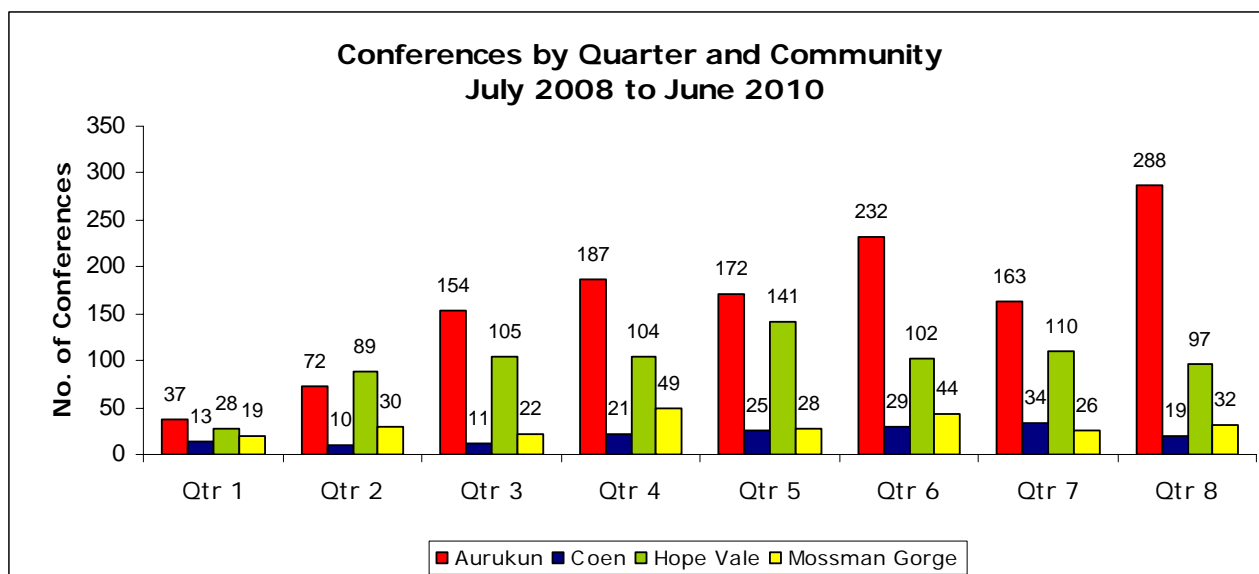
The Commission became operational on 1 July 2008 and commenced conferencing on 12 August 2008. In quarter eight the Commission received 992 agency notifications, some of which related to more than one person. Of that figure 741 notifications (75 percent) were within the Commission's jurisdiction and 251 notifications (25 percent) were outside the Commission's jurisdiction.

During the intake phase notifications are assessed to establish whether the person/s notified are within the jurisdiction of the Commission in accordance with the Act. Section 49 of the Act provides that the Commission can deal with an agency notification relating to a community member. Section 7 of the Act defines a community member as being a person who is a welfare recipient and who also lives in one of the four CYWR communities or has lived there for a period of three months since 1 July 2008.

Conferences

The objective of the Commission, as set out in the Act, is primarily to conduct conferences with community members and 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 CYWR communities.

In quarter eight a total of 436 conferences were held, which resulted in 57 Family Responsibility Agreements being entered into, 54 directions made to attend community support services and 68 Conditional Income Management orders. Other outcomes included no further action, rescheduling, scheduling to return for review with compliance and the assignment of personal responsibility actions. The Commission did not hold conferences for two weeks in quarter eight. These weeks were dedicated to Local Commissioner and staff training and development and an implementation review of the custom built database. Aurukun conferences accounted for 66 percent of the total number of conferences held reflecting the high number of notifications attributed to Aurukun community at 53 percent of all notifications within jurisdiction.



Graph 4: Conferences by community and quarter 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

Case Management

As at 30 June 2010, 496 clients were being case managed. Clients facing significant barriers such as addiction, repeat 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. This may require referral to more than one service provider or the client attending conference on a different matter and having a case plan reviewed to reflect the complexity of issues faced by the client. The Commission recognises that the availability and capacity of services is preventing some clients being able to comply with their case plans. At the 22 February 2010 FR Board meeting funding was approved for an additional Business Support Officer, whose prime responsibility will be the implementation and ongoing delivery of the intensive case management model. This position has now been filled and commenced in the role. The Commission is now developing the methodology to identify those clients most in need and will work closely with Commissioners and Local Coordinators to ensure clients engage voluntarily in the process and capitalise on the opportunity for assistance.

REFERRAL TYPE	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	TOTAL
FIM	15	38	61	27	49	41	22	21	274
WBC	27	51	132	66	87	80	93	25	561
ACM	7	6	24	55	22	22	10	5	151
Parenting Program	8	3	4	1	2	7	2	4	31
Other	17	31	24	19	15	5	43	28	182
TOTAL	74	129	245	168	175	155	170	83	1199

Table 2: Referral services by quarter as at 30 June 2010

Although the primary focus of conferences is to discuss the notifications relating to the client, rarely is this the sole outcome of a conference as clients often require specialised assistance in navigating the multiple commitments of agencies such as obtaining birth certificates and payment of outstanding fines. Commissioners and Local Coordinators continue to experience clients seeking assistance to contact agencies such as Centrelink Remote Servicing, Queensland Corrective Services, Magistrates Courts, State Penalties Enforcement Registry and Child Safety Services. In addressing continued school absences of high school children, the Commissioners have developed relationships with TSS, DET, Abstudy and parents in a consolidated effort to ensure children further their education at boarding school or training colleges.

Show Cause recommendations continue to be assessed on a case by case basis by the Commissioners, primarily because the assessment draws upon the service providers' monthly progress reports and requested summary reports at the initial investigation stage. The continuing turnover of service provider staff significantly impacts on the quality of reports, plus individual definitions of reporting criteria (attend, progress and engage) continue to provide inconsistent reports. The Registry and Local Commissioners continue to offer training and direction to service providers for the induction of new staff.

It should be noted that the number of clients case managed (496) includes clients on voluntary case plans plus those clients who are incarcerated, out of community, in hospital and on probation orders. In these circumstances not all clients are investigated for Show Cause proceedings but are monitored pending changes to their situation.

During quarter eight, 20 Show Cause hearings were held in Aurukun, Coen and Hope Vale (see Table 3).

These matters resulted in:

- 4 New Family Responsibility Agreements and Case Plans
- 6 Orders for Income Management
- 3 No Further Actions
- 7 Hearings adjourned to a later date to give the client time to comply with their case plan

The Commission finalised a number of outstanding Show Cause notices in quarter eight that had been held over from the previous quarter as the Commissioners had previously adjourned the matters to give clients further time to engage with service providers who had not been able to provide services. The quality of Monthly Progress Reports continues to impact on clients being selected for Show Cause investigations. The implementation of a new reporting regime (electronic uploads) will provide for a consistent approach to the quality of information provided in the monthly progress reports. The Commission is continuing to work with service providers to address these issues and is engaging other avenues of service provision with clearer reporting, to ensure natural justice in assessing clients for Show Cause. An example of this is referring the client to the three day Ending Family Violence Program and assisting the client to attend. If the client does not attend on two occasions and does not provide a reasonable excuse, the Show Cause process is enacted and once the other criteria for Show Cause are met the recommendation can be presented to the Commissioners for final assessment.

COMMUNITY	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	TOTAL
Aurukun	0	0	2	9	9	28	9	15	72
Coen	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	2	9
Hope Vale	0	0	0	3	1	13	4	3	24
Mossman Gorge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	3	18	10	41	13	20	105

Table 3: Show Cause Notices by quarter as at 30 June 2010

The number of applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders received in quarter eight (22) is approximately ten percent of those clients income managed (231 as at 30 June 2010). The Commission encourages clients to lodge Amend and End Applications where their change of circumstances potentially warrants a change to their Agreement or Order. The Commissioners are encouraged to assist clients to provide evidence of why the End or Amend Applications should be considered, such as clients seeking work opportunities and attending at service providers. Each application is considered on its own merit and clients are encouraged to take on personal responsibility actions when CIM orders are revoked.

Of the 22 applications received, they resulted in:

- 10 CIM orders revoked
- 2 Client failed to appear and the application was dismissed
- 5 Applications rejected
- 5 Scheduled for July 2010

COMMUNITY	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	TOTAL
Aurukun	0	0	2	7	8	0	4	6	27
Coen	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Hope Vale	0	0	5	2	9	6	7	11	40
Mossman Gorge	0	0	1	3	5	0	0	4	13
TOTAL	0	0	8	12	22	6	13	22	83

Table 4: Amend or End Applications Orders by quarter as at 30 June 2010

Conditional Income Management

Sixty-eight Conditional Income Management (CIM) orders were made in quarter eight with a total of 321 CIM orders made to 30 June 2010 (see Table 5). CIM orders are made where the client has either failed to attend two scheduled conferences, or where a client is not complying with case plan requirements and/or the Commission is continuing to receive additional notifications relating to those clients. Since the Commission commenced operations, 75 percent of clients have received multiple notifications. The Commissioners report that many of these clients have been given numerous opportunities to engage in case plans, attend conference or take action to have CIM orders amended (such as attend service providers) and have refused, which has resulted in the number of CIM orders.

The Commission acknowledges that the situation of clients can change during the trial. This is reflected in the CIM orders that are unable to be enacted due to the client not currently receiving income support payments. These clients may be working or choosing not to receive income support payments. The order remains current for 12 months and will be enacted if the client claims payments that are subject to income management jurisdiction during this period. In addition, community members in CYWR communities that are Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) participants are subject to removal from the program under a recommendation from the Commission and subsequent decision from FaHCSIA to exit the client from CDEP.

For those clients subject to CIM, the Commissioners review their progress at the six and 10 month point of their order and discuss future options. Some clients continue to advise of their desire to remain on CIM for an extended period under a new case plan and/or decrease the percentage managed from 75 to 60 percent.

Commissioners advise that increasing numbers of clients are requesting CIM orders and to be placed on a BasicsCard as they view the income management as a means to stabilise the household and ensure bills are paid and children are fed. These clients ask that the Commission order the income management rather than request the Voluntary Income Management (VIM) due to pressures from spouses and family members associated with power balances and domestic violence.

Those clients who do request VIM advise it is a feasible antidote to family and social pressure to hand over cash for non essential items and contraband. Since commencement, 19 clients and community members have successfully applied for VIM. Three are currently not in receipt of Centrelink payments but have requested the VIM remain. Three clients have had their VIM revocation enacted.

COMMUNITY	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 5	Qtr 6	Qtr 7	Qtr 8	TOTAL
Aurukun	0	6	10	19	18	37	21	46	157
Coen	1	0	0	0	1	11	10	2	25
Hope Vale	0	7	18	8	13	21	13	15	95
Mossman Gorge	1	11	4	4	9	7	3	5	44
TOTAL	2	24	32	31	41	76	47	68	321

Table 5: Quarterly Conditionally Income Managed orders as at 30 June 2010

Notifications

For the period 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2010 the Commission received a total of **992** agency notifications¹ of which 741, or 75 percent, were within the Commission's jurisdiction. Of the 741 notifications that were within the Commission's jurisdiction, they comprised of:

- 351 School Attendance notifications
- 230 Magistrates Courts notifications
- 111 Child Safety notifications
- 49 Housing Tenancy notifications

Of the 251, or 25 percent, not within the Commission's jurisdiction, there were 201 Magistrates Courts notifications, 27 School Attendance notifications, 14 Child Safety notifications and 9 Housing Tenancy notifications.

Details for each community are as follows:

- **Aurukun's 396** notifications comprise **53 percent** of the total notifications in jurisdiction across the four CYWR communities:
 - 221 School Attendance notifications
 - 101 Magistrates Courts notifications
 - 56 Child Safety notifications
 - 18 Housing Tenancy notifications

31 Magistrates Courts notifications, 4 School Attendance notifications, 3 Child Safety notifications and 1 Housing Tenancy notification were processed as not within jurisdiction.

288 conferences have been held in Aurukun this quarter.²

- **Coen's 48** notifications comprise **7 percent** of the total notices in jurisdiction:
 - 28 Magistrates Courts notifications
 - 14 Child Safety notifications
 - 6 School Attendance notifications

13 Magistrate Courts notifications, 6 School Attendance notifications and 1 Child Safety notification were processed as not within jurisdiction.

¹ Counting rules are that an agency notification is counted on the basis of number of "clients" on the notification, for example: a child safety notification relating to two parents is counted as two notifications.

² The number of conferences held relates to the number of conferences listed, which includes where a client was served with a Notice to Attend Conference and subsequently failed to attend.

19 Conferences have been held in Coen this quarter. ³

- **Hope Vale's 255** notifications comprise **34 percent** of the total notifications in jurisdiction:
 - 114 School Attendance notifications
 - 77 Magistrates Courts notifications
 - 36 Child Safety notifications
 - 28 Housing Tenancy notifications

17 School Attendance notifications, 10 Child Safety Notifications, 9 Magistrates Courts notifications and 8 Housing Tenancy notifications, were processed as not within jurisdiction.

97 conferences have been held in Hope Vale this quarter. ⁴

- **Mossman Gorge's 42** notifications comprise **6 percent** of the total notifications in jurisdiction:
 - 24 Magistrates Courts notifications
 - 10 School Attendance notifications
 - 5 Child Safety notifications
 - 3 Housing Tenancy notifications

148 Magistrates Courts notifications were processed as not within jurisdiction.

32 Conferences have been held in Mossman Gorge this quarter. ⁵

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

5. Data Summary and Trends

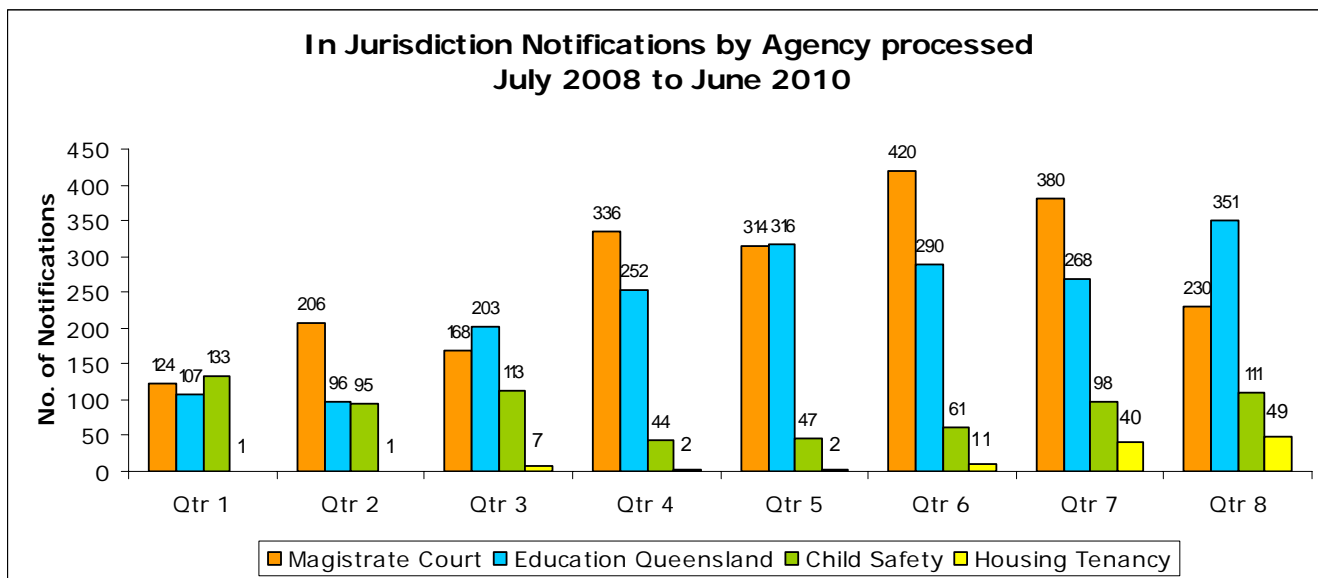
In quarter eight total notifications decreased from 1077 in quarter seven to 922. Significantly, Magistrates Court notifications decreased whilst School Attendance notifications increased. The Registry reports fewer court sittings in this quarter and a delay in lodgement of the notifications until after the end of quarter eight were the primary factors for the decrease in notifications from the Magistrates Courts. It is therefore expected that quarter nine will show an increase in Magistrates Courts notifications due to the administrative delay.

Although Housing Tenancy notifications rose in quarter eight from 40 in quarter seven to 49, notifications dropped in Hope Vale (39 to 28) and appeared for the first time in Aurukun (18). Both Hope Vale and Aurukun transitioned to the Social Housing Rent Policy in late 2009 and the impact of paying rent on individuals will take time to be normalised in everyday life. It is expected that through a number of tenancy management initiatives, including family case conferencing, and the continuation of repayment plan options that housing notifications will stabilise to reflect the communities compliance with rental agreements.

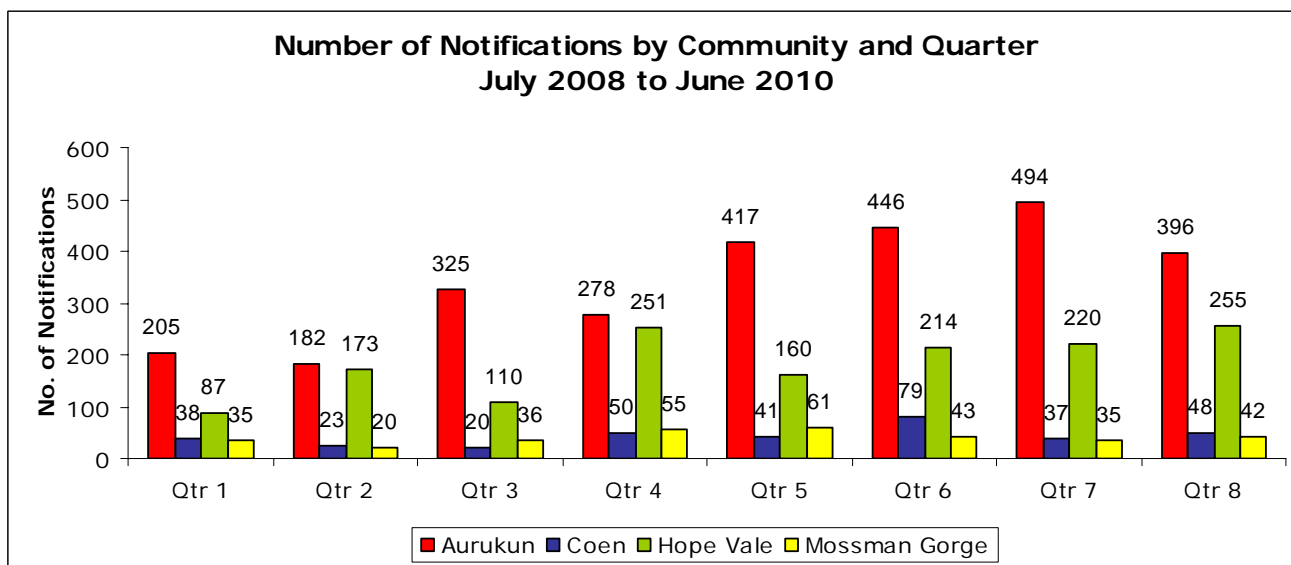
Decreases in school attendance were experienced in all four communities when comparing term 2, 2010 against term 2, 2009. In Aurukun school attendance decreased by 5.5 percentage points from term 2, 2010 (57.7 percent) when compared against term 2, 2009 (63.2 percent) Whilst this decrease is somewhat concerning anecdotal evidence suggests that more children are attending school, however, due to the provisions of the Act, even when a child is late they are categorised as a part day absence and therefore meet the threshold for an unreasonable absence. This indicates that more effort needs to be focussed on educating parents and children on the importance of getting to school on time. Hope Vale experienced a decrease of 3.4 percentage points, Mossman Gorge 2.5 percentage points and Coen 1.4 percentage points. Caution should be used when examining the percentage changes in attendance for both Mossman Gorge and Coen communities. As both these communities have relatively small numbers of students, a small numerical change can result in a large percentage difference in the overall attendance figures. Changes with record keeping practices over time may impact on the ability to compare school attendance across years. Secondary school students are not currently case managed as part of the Attendance Case Management Framework so this impacts attendance. In term 1, 2010 Mossman Gorge community had 28 students enrolled at Mossman State School or Mossman State High School, while Coen had 48 students enrolled at Coen State School. The fall in school attendance is reflected in the increase in School Attendance notifications 268 in quarter seven to 351 in quarter eight. The 5.5 percentage point fall in Aurukun attendance corresponds with an increase in notifications from 196 to 221. Hope Vale experienced the greatest rise in School Attendance notifications from 60 in quarter seven to 114 in quarter eight.

Child Safety notifications continue to rise steadily, from 61 in quarter six, 98 in quarter seven to 111 in quarter eight. The increase in notifications is due to a ongoing commitment by Child Safety Services to the Welfare Reform sites, assigning resources and allocating additional staff who not only investigate cases but conduct information sessions and outreach to the communities. The Commissioners report community members have greater understanding of the role of Child Safety Services and are more willing to report incidents to allow Child Safety Services to investigate families and the welfare of children. Prior to Welfare Reform, many community members believed Child Safety Services took children from community without investigation or without working with the family and extended family. It is well known that this is not the case and in fact many community members now welcome Child Safety Service officers and are forthcoming with information.

It appears the overall trend in Magistrates Courts notifications will continue to drop from the peak in quarter six at 420 notifications, although not as significantly as this quarter, which is partially due to administrative processing timeframes. Queensland Police advise that a full complement of staff will soon commence in Aurukun. The ability of police to be proactive and dedicate resourcing to enforcement rather than emergency management, and having police regularly accessing outlying areas such as Archer River, may also reduce the fall in notifications for Aurukun and Coen in the future.



Graph 5: Notices by agency processed 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

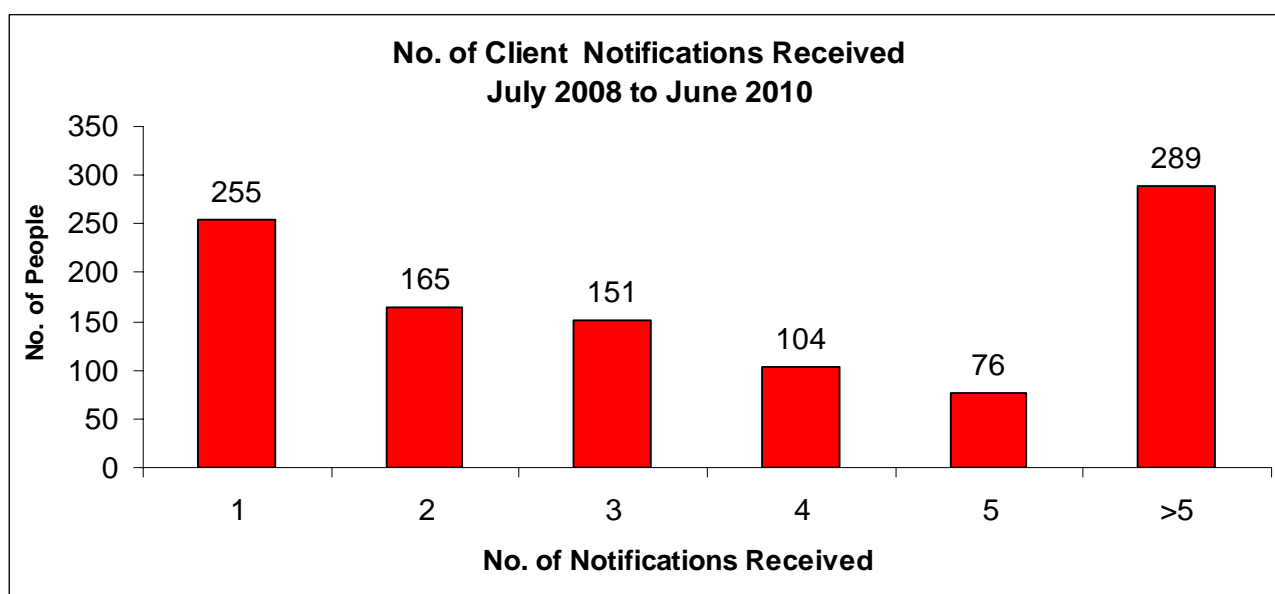


Graph 6: Notifications by community and quarter 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

The Commission held 436 conferences across the four communities in quarter eight, an increase from 333 conferences held in quarter seven. The Commission commenced 2010 with a reduced sitting calendar to allow a recall and review week every fifth week in the calendar. As the Commission completes its second year of operation it acknowledges the increasing need to spend greater time and resources in developing the Commissioners and instituting process improvements. The reduced sitting calendar has not significantly impacted on conferences or client engagement due to increased operational efficiency and the Commissioners have benefited from the break in conferencing and the training provided in non-conference weeks. The Commission was able to

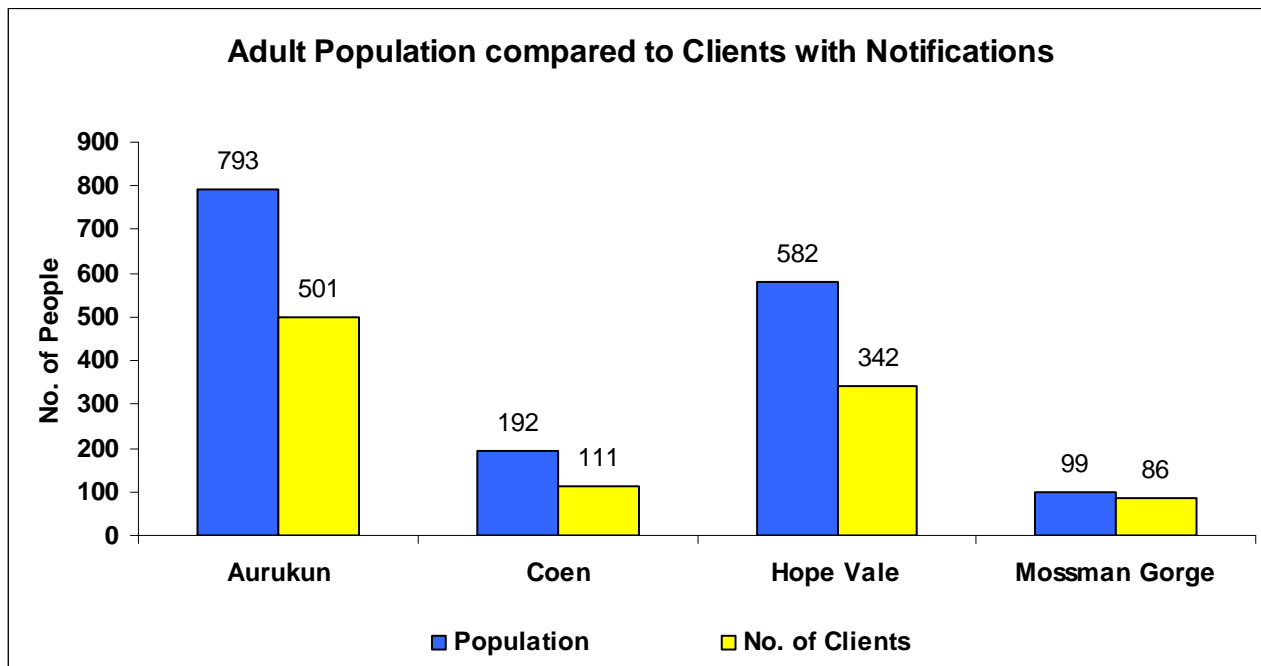
service all scheduled conferences this quarter in all communities as per the calendar with the exception of only one day of reduced sittings in Aurukun.

Twenty-seven percent of clients have received more than five notifications since 1 July 2008. In many instances this illustrates multiple child absences for the one family or multiple Magistrates Courts notifications relating to one incident. As the Commission continues to see repeat clients, the number of orders to place clients on income management increases with Commissioners providing the client numerous opportunities to engage with service providers or to take action to reduce notifications (such as children attending school regularly). To date 25 percent of clients have received only one notification.



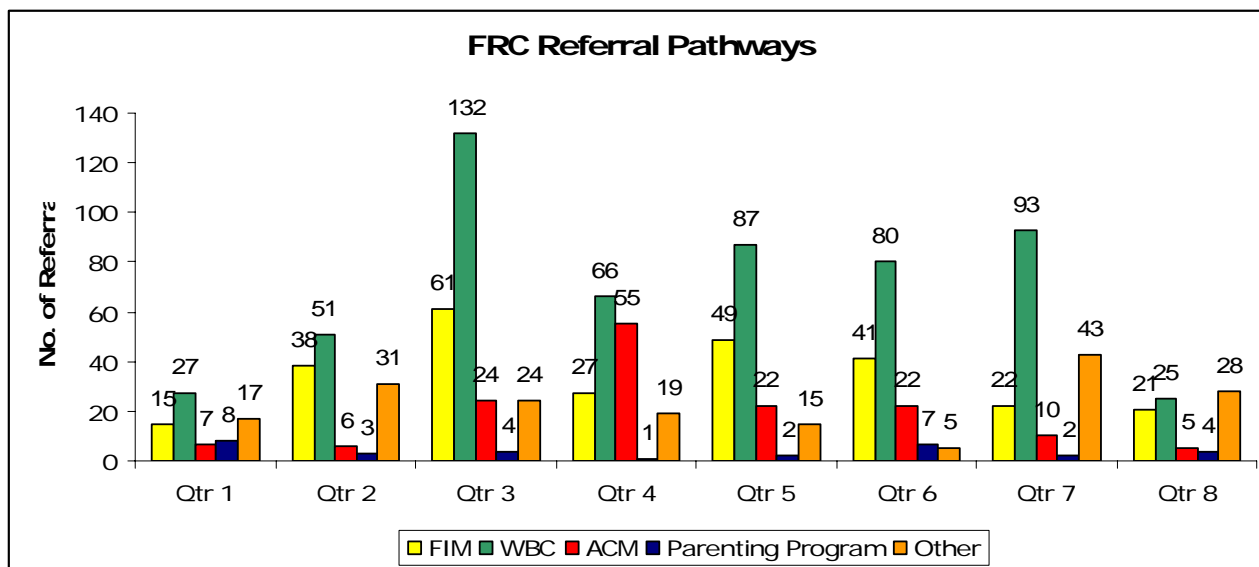
Graph 7: Clients by number of notifications 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

(Note: Counting rules stipulate that where multiple charges are received each charge is counted as an individual notification or each child's absence is counted as one notification for example if three children from the one family were absent, that is counted as three notifications).



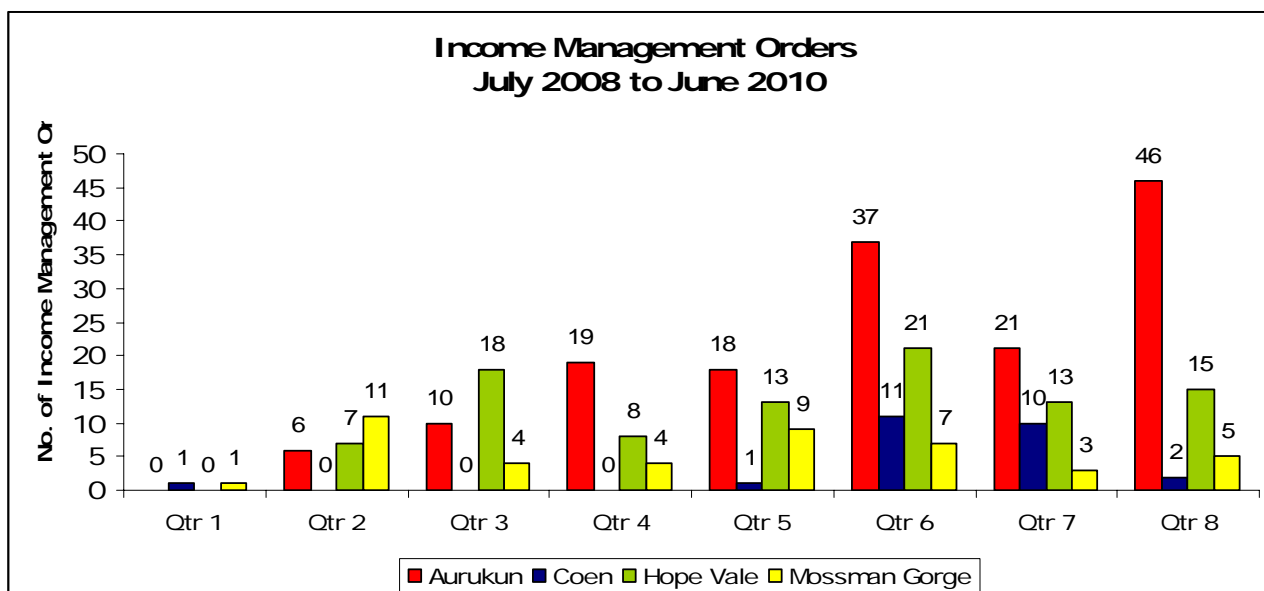
Graph 8: Number of clients who have received notifications up until 30 June 2010 in comparison to population figures of adults (17 years and over) provided from ABS preliminary 30 June 2009 ERP Figures. These figures include clients who have received more than one notification.

Referrals to service providers decreased from 170 in quarter seven to 83 in quarter eighth, significantly the referrals to WBC dropped from 93 to 25 in this quarter. Upon being advised by the Royal Flying Doctors Service of resource and capacity issues across all Welfare Reform sites but predominately Aurukun, the Commissioners decreased case plan referrals to the WBC. The Commission considers the need to address existing clients and the complexity of their needs must be prioritised. Those placed on new case plans can be referred to alternative service providers or personal responsibility actions instigated. The Commission continued to refer clients to the jointly facilitated Ending Family Violence Program and encouraged those already on probation orders to attend the program. Commissioners advise that if the anticipated new service providers who have already been allocated various levels of funding do not commence in community soon, the opportunity to be part of the CYWR trial will be lost. Community members are exasperated by promises of programs and services such as support for domestic violence, addiction and parenting which do not materialise and leave those vulnerable members of community without support. Commissioners advise they have few referral options and those that are quietly providing services are overloaded and exhausted.



Graph 9: Referral Pathways 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

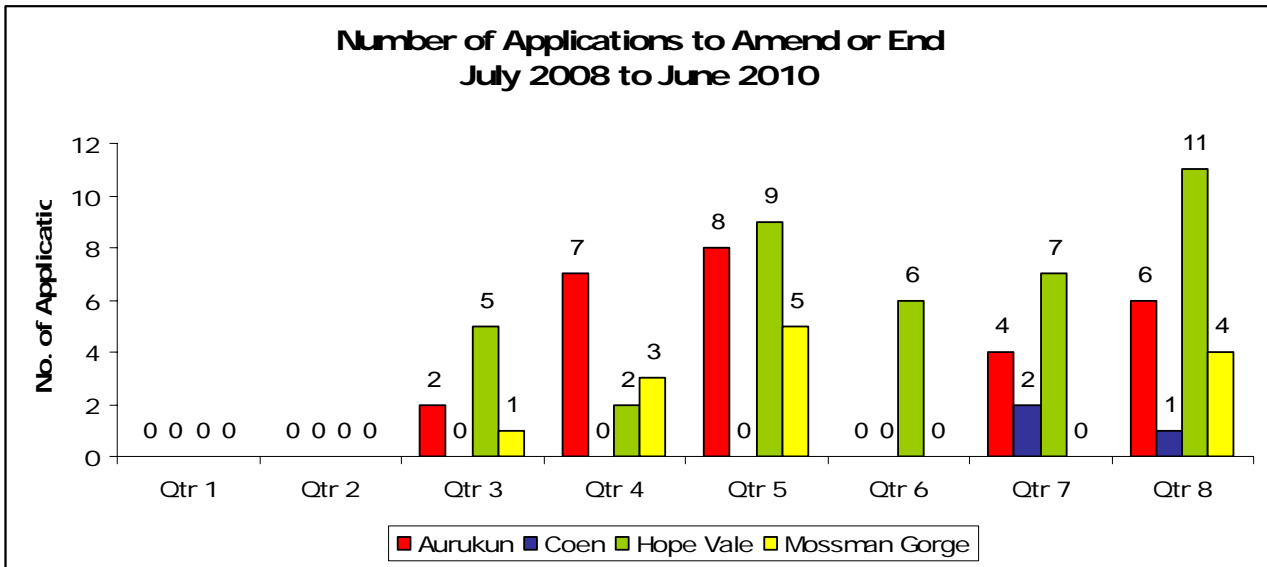
CIM Orders increased from 47 in quarter seven to 68 in quarter eight. Aurukun CIM orders rose from 21 to 46 partially due to a number of clients on Show Cause Notices who had been given extra time in quarter seven to comply with case plan referrals and did not. Aurukun Commissioners also experienced a significant number of clients who had been given a number of opportunities to address school attendance issues and had failed to improve the school attendance of the children they were responsible for. The Commissioners are continuing to conference these clients and seek assistance from service providers to deal with truancy issues. As Commissioners deal with each client and situation individually, the decision to order Income Management does not have a direct causal effect, such as non-attendance at service providers. Under Section 71 of the Act, the Commissioners must have regard to many factors within the client's life and the impact of the decision.



Graph 10: Conditional Income Management 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010.

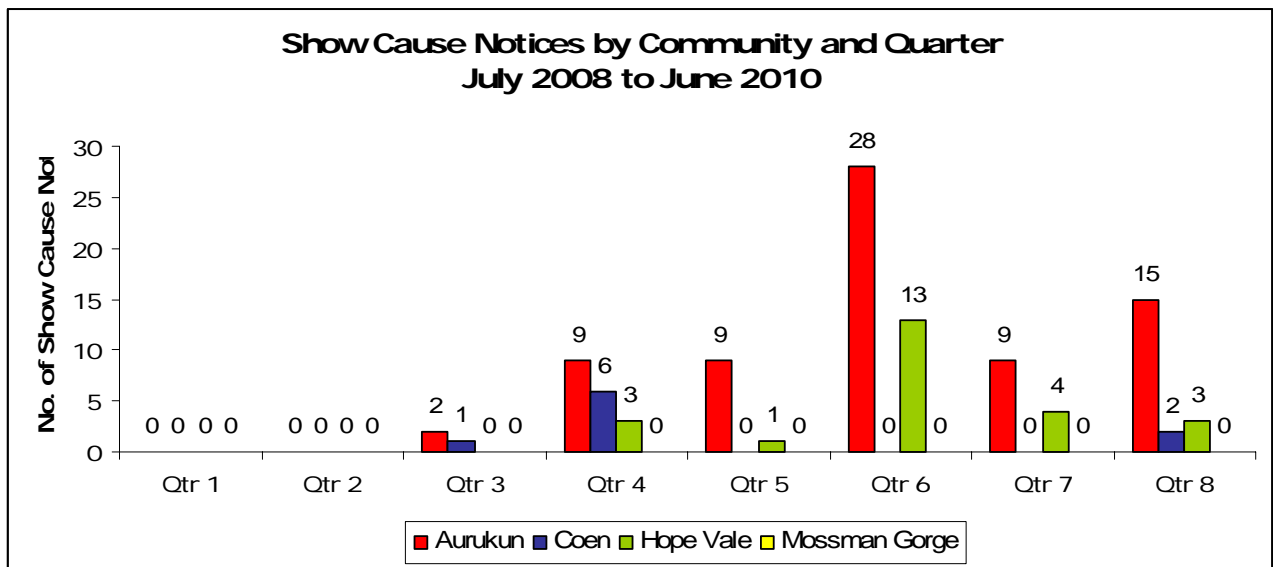
Twenty Applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders were heard by Commissioners in quarter eight, an increase from thirteen in quarter seven. Hope Vale presented with the most applications being eleven and Coen the least with one. Commissioners view the Amend or End

Applications as an opportunity to engage with clients regarding their individual circumstances and in some cases this is the first conference attendance for the client as the CIM order may have been implemented due to their non-attendance at two consecutive conferences.



Graph 11: Applications to Amend or End FRA or Order 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

The Commission conducted 20 Show Cause conferences in quarter eight and, although an increase from 13 in the previous quarter, the Commission believes it is still constrained in ensuring natural justice for clients and thus Show Causes are not a true reflection of non-compliance. In January 2010, the Commissioner and Registrar met with managers from all of the community support services and undertook to grant latitude to the providers to induct new staff, establish processes and procedures, and develop programs and initiatives. Whilst the Commission awaits the service providers to provide processes and procedures and develop community based programs, recruitment of new staff has continued with limited success and basic reporting and provision of services criteria are not being met. The Commission will continue to provide training and assistance to service providers but is also aware of the closing deadline of case plans under Section 156 of the Act, which is 1 January 2012.



Graph 12: Show Cause Notices 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2010

6. Observations / Future Direction

Observations

The Commission remains committed to regular and consistent client conferencing and also to developing the Local Commissioners to assist in the restoration of social norms and local Indigenous authority in the Welfare Reform communities.

In this quarter Commission staff and Local Commissioners continued their participation with agencies to raise awareness of, and resolve issues affecting their respective community including:

- In Aurukun, Commissioners continue to work actively with the Principal and ACMs to develop strategies to encourage consistent school attendance.
- Continued development and training of Local Commissioners including Mental Health First Aid training, mediation and Justice of the Peace (Qualified).
- Direct referrals to Drug and Alcohol Diversion program with WBC, Hope Vale.
- Commissioners continue to meet regularly with Child Safety representatives who attend individual conferences (when agreed).
- Ending Family Violence Programs commenced in all four communities totalling nine programs and 25 graduates with direct case plan referrals from the Commission.
- Aurukun and Hope Vale Commissioners met with Chief Executive Officers and Managing Directors of leading companies that are members of the Indigenous Enterprise Partnership to discuss current issues in Cape York communities and the operations of the Commission.
- Attendance at official openings and commitment to funding of an additional \$2.4M to the \$22M over four years for staffing and resources of the Wellbeing Centres by the Honourable Warren Snowdon, Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health and Regional Service Delivery (Commonwealth).
- Opening of ACT for Kids Safe House in Aurukun by the Honourable Phil Reeves, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport (Queensland).
- Reopening of the kindergarten in Coen has been welcomed by the community and is seen as an excellent transition for children entering primary school.
- Recruitment of Coen Administrative Officer with all Local Commissioners forming the selection panel.
- Mossman Gorge Commissioners attended Mental Health First Aid Training.

Challenges

- Women's Shelters remain closed in Aurukun; hence women and children must be moved from community when experiencing violence or unsafe conditions. This disconnects them from family and valuable support networks and often results in them returning to the household to be close to family despite the risks.
- Chroming and the use of inhalants have recently been identified in Aurukun as peaking, with mature men leading a group of young people in the use of petrol and other inhalants. A recent incident of petrol, rather than OPAL, being purchased for the community and the returning to community of individuals with pre-existing addiction and sniffing knowledge, have combined to filter down to youths in the community experimenting with sniffing petrol and inhalants. Visiting contractors are reliant on petrol for vehicles and boats as OPAL cannot be purchased in Weipa. This in turn reflects on the stealing of contractor vehicles to obtain the fuel for sniffing. The Local Program Office, Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health are keen to reduce the availability of fuel entering the community through establishing an OPAL supplier in Weipa and mandatory requirements for contractors. The Aurukun WBC advises it does not

have the expertise to deal with users of inhalants and are unable to provide programs or assistance to addicts, experimental youths or families. A working group recently meet with Indigenous Coordination Centre funded Makin Tracks representatives to discuss a variety of options including night patrols, traditional camping on outstations and alternative activities to relieve youth boredom. There remains a lack of clinical expertise to assist with rehabilitation once the users are identified. The Commissioners are hopeful that Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services (ATODS), currently in community fortnightly, can have a more regular presence in community to assist with all levels of users. Sniffing and chroming remains an issue amongst a small band of teenagers in Hope Vale and recently was identified in Mossman Gorge, although community members and ATODS intervened quickly to prevent further experimentation by youth in Mossman Gorge.

Future Direction

- Induction and training of new Commissioners has commenced and will continue into the next quarter.
- Further development and training opportunities for Local Commissioners will continue to be delivered.
- The Commission is awaiting the delivery of the independent review of the Commission's implementation conducted by KPMG. Once received, the Commission will consider any recommendations made and potential impact on the Commission's operations.
- Completion of Justice of the Peace and Mediation training for Coen and Aurukun Commissioners.
- Commission staff look forward to implementing the Intensive Case Management Model in all communities and the collaboration with government agencies, non-government organisations and service providers.
- The Commissioners look forward to the commencement of the new Officer in Charge of Aurukun Police Station.

7. Appendices

APPENDIX A



SITTING CALENDAR – Version 2d
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION
1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010



WEEK COMMENCING	Commissioner	COEN Mon/Tues	AURUKUN Tues/Wed/Thurs	HOPE VALE Tues/Wed	MOSSMAN GORGE Thurs	OFFICE CAIRNS
4 JANUARY	DRG					All week
11 JANUARY	DRG					All week
18 JANUARY	DRG					All week
25 JANUARY	DRG					All week
1 FEBRUARY	DRG		2, 3, 4			1, 5
8 FEBRUARY	DRG			9,10	11	8, 12
15 FEBRUARY	DRG	15	16, 17, 18			19
22 FEBRUARY	DRG			23, 24	25	22 Board Meeting 26
1 MARCH	DRG					All week
8 MARCH	DRG	8	9, 10, 11			12
15 MARCH	DRG			16,17	18	15, 19
22 MARCH	DRG	22	24, 25			23 26 Social Dev Com
29 MARCH	DRG			30, 31	29 Mar	1 Apr 2 Apr Good Friday
5 APRIL	DRG					All week
12 APRIL	DRG		13, 14, 15			12, 16
19 APRIL	DRG	19		20, 21	22	19, 23
26 APRIL	DRG		27, 28, 29			30 26 ANZAC Day
3 MAY	DRG			4, 5	6	7 3 May Day
10 MAY	DRG	10	11, 12, 13			14
17 MAY	DRG					17 Board Meeting 18, 19, 20, 21
24 MAY	DRG	24	25, 26, 27			28
31 MAY/1 JUNE	DRG			1, 2	3	31, 4
7 JUNE	DRG		8, 9, 10			7, 11
14 JUNE	DRG			15, 16	17	18 14 Queens Birthday
21 JUNE	DRG	21	22, 23, 24			24 & 25 'Closing the Gap' Canberra

SITTING CALENDAR – Version 2d
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION
1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010

WEEK COMMENCING	Commissioner	COEN Mon/Tues	AURUKUN Tues/Wed/Thurs	HOPE VALE Tues/Wed	MOSSMAN GORGE Thurs	OFFICE CAIRNS
28 JUNE	DRG					All week
5 JULY	DRG					NAIDOC
12 JULY	DRG			13, 14	Mon 12	14 Hearing Brisbane 15
19 JULY	DRG					21 Estimates Hearing Brisbane 23 Cairns Show Day
26 JULY	DRG	26	27, 28, 29			30
2 AUGUST	DRG			3, 4	5	2, 6
9 AUGUST	DRG		10, 11, 12			9, 13
16 AUGUST	DRG					16 Board Meeting 17 18 19 20
23 AUGUST	DRG			24, 25	26	23, 27
30 AUGUST	DRG	30	31, 1, 2			3
6 SEPTEMBER	DRG			7, 8	9	6, 10
13 SEPTEMBER	DRG	13	14, 15, 16			17
20 SEPTEMBER	DRG					All week
27 SEPTEMBER	DRG					All week
4 OCTOBER	DRG			5, 6	7	4, 8
11 OCTOBER	DRG	11	12, 13, 14			15
18 OCTOBER	DRG			19, 20	21	18, 22
25 OCTOBER	DRG		26, 27, 28			25, 29
1 NOVEMBER	DRG					All week
8 NOVEMBER	DRG			9, 10	11	8, 12
15 NOVEMBER	DRG	15	16, 17, 18			19
22 NOVEMBER	DRG			23, 24	25	22 Board Meeting 26
29 NOVEMBER	DRG		30, 1, 2			29 Nov, 3 Dec
6 DECEMBER	DRG			7, 8	9	6, 10
13 DECEMBER	DRG	13	14, 15, 16			17
20 DECEMBER	DRG					All week
27 DECEMBER	DRG					Office closed for Holidays

Governance

Part 12 of the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (the Board).

The Board has a mandate to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about the operation of the Commission and similarly to give advice and make recommendations to the Commissioner about the performance of the Commission's functions.

The Board must meet at least every three months and each member must be present at each meeting. The Board's membership consists of:

- 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, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Glossary of Terms

Wellbeing Centre (WBC):

These centres are currently operated by the Royal Flying Doctor Service and are the primary referral agency for the Commission. The Wellbeing Centres provide:

- a holistic, systemic and community-based approach to treating drug and alcohol addiction and related mental health co-morbidities, including family violence and gambling;
- clinical assessments, formal and informal counselling, support for individuals and their families, and support for community-driven activities that build community capacity;
- support for restoring social norms and empowering individuals to take responsibility for making positive choices about their health and wellbeing.

Each WBC is staffed with clinical counsellors and one or more community support workers. Staff are also supported by part-time medical practitioners, mental health nurses and psychiatrists, team leaders and a service development manager.

New buildings have been completed to support the WBC in each community. Services are fully operational at the time of the report.

Family Income Management (FIM):

Family Income Management (FIM) is a voluntary, confidential and free service that is specifically designed to meet the particular needs of Indigenous individuals and families, and provide them with the education, information and ongoing support needed to manage their own money.

FIM provides support and assistance including referrals and access to financial institutions, products and services. It also provides general information, education and ongoing support to individuals and families about improving the outcomes for children.

FIM operates in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge and has been operating in a number of Cape York communities since 2001.

Attendance Case Management Framework (ACMF):

The Attendance Case Management Framework (ACMF) was developed by Cape York Partnerships to support student attendance. The ACMF uses Professor Herbert C Kelman's behavioural change model which identifies three stages leading to behavioural change: compliance, identification, and internalisation. ACMF works with students, parents, schools and the broader community to set the expectation of 100 percent attendance and to build and sustain it as a "social norm".

Under the ACMF, Attendance Case Managers (ACMs) aim to follow up every absence, on the day, to work with families to resolve the reason behind a child's unexplained absence or lateness and to develop strategies to avoid reoccurrences. ACMs also refer parents to support services like FIM or alcohol addiction support as required. Such quick response reduces the incidence of parents being called before the Commission on student attendance-related issues.

ACMs use positive reinforcement to publicly and privately acknowledge 100 percent attendance.

Cape York Welfare Reform

The Cape York Welfare Reforms are a partnership between four Cape York communities, the Queensland and Australian Governments 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 Cape York Welfare Reform communities are:

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 population of 793 people as at 30 June 2009⁵.



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 population of about 192 people at 30 June 2009⁶.

Hope Vale

Hope Vale is situated on the Cape York Peninsula and is 46 kilometres northwest of Cooktown. The estimated resident population of Hope Vale was about 582 people at 30 June 2009⁷.

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 population of about 99 people at 30 June 2009⁸.

For more information on the communities and population compositions view:

www.indigenous.qld.gov.au and www.statistics@oesr.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles

Role of the Commission:

Any person who is a welfare recipient living in one of the four CYWR communities and has not met predetermined obligations can be referred to the Commission. A person is a welfare recipient if the person, or their partner, receives certain welfare payments including; Newstart, Parenting Payments, Youth Allowance, Disability Support Pension and ABSTUDY. A person is also a 'welfare recipient' if he/she is participating in CDEP.

The Commission receives agency notifications from a range of government departments, authorities and the Magistrates Courts if:

⁵ Adults 17 and over provided from ABS preliminary 30 June 2009 ERP figures.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid

- the person's child is absent from school three times in a school term, without reasonable excuse,
- the person has a child of school age who is not enrolled in school without lawful excuse,
- the person is the subject of a child safety report,
- the person is convicted of an offence in the Magistrates Court,
- the person breaches his or her tenancy agreement – for example, by using the premises for an illegal purpose, causing a nuisance or failing to remedy rent arrears.

What does the Commission do?

When the Commission receives a referral, after assessing if the person is within the Commission's jurisdiction, Local Commissioners will determine if the person is required to attend a conference. Conferences are held in an informal setting and the matters that lead to the submission of the agency notification are discussed to ensure the best outcome for the client. The client is encouraged to come to an agreement with the Commission about an appropriate response to the issue that has led to their referral. If the client is unwilling to agree on a course of action, the Commission may order a certain course of action.

The Commission may:

- decide that no action is necessary,
- reprimand the person,
- recommend that the person attend an appropriate community support service,
- direct the person to attend an appropriate community support service under a case plan for not more than a year,
- order that the person's income be managed by Centrelink for a period of between three to 12 months.

Family Responsibilities Commission Processes:

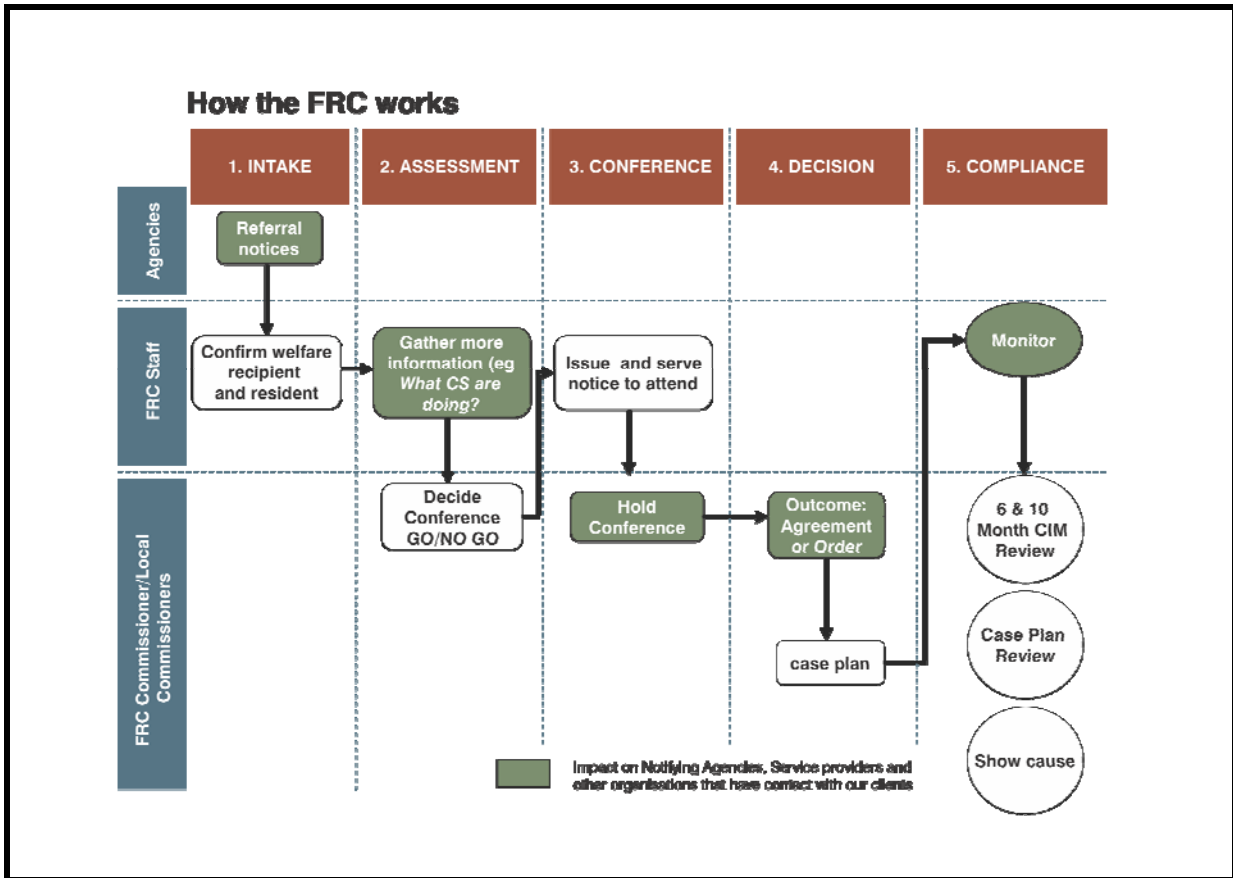


Table 6: Commission processes