

Family Responsibilities Commission

*Report to the Family Responsibilities Board and
The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs*

Quarterly Report

No. 17

July 2012 to September 2012



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

Executive Summary

During quarter 17, 862 agency notices were received by the Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission) which were within jurisdiction, an increase of 151 from last quarter. There were 451 conferences held for the same period, representing an increase of 81 from last quarter. One Family Responsibility Agreement (FRA) was entered into, 50 orders were made to attend community support services and 97 Conditional Income Management (CIM) orders were issued. When compared to last quarter this represents a decrease of 8 FRA's and 4 orders to attend community support services, with an increase of 46 orders for CIM.

Community members are continuing to support Voluntary Income Management (VIM), an option which allows people to manage their budgets and meet the costs of everyday essentials. Since the commencement of the Commission, 53 VIM agreements have been processed.

The Commission case managed 193 clients during the quarter. The Commissioners made 103 referrals relating to 54 clients, a decrease of 12 referrals from last quarter. Further activity during the quarter consisted of 2 Show Cause conferences held, a decrease of 4 from last quarter and 27 Applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders received, an increase of 12 from the previous quarter.

Readers of this quarterly report should note that in order to align with the 2011-2012 annual reporting requirements published by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Commission has adopted a more condensed reporting format. The new format presents information in a concise manner which provides a balanced and transparent account of the Commission's quarterly performance.

Following extensive stakeholder and community consultation regarding the future of the Commission, on 31 August 2012 the Queensland Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, announced the extension of the Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) trial until 1 January 2014. Subsequently the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2012 was introduced to Parliament. The Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2012 is a pre-condition for the extension to occur.

Subject to the closure of the Commission on 31 December 2013, the Commission, together with the Family Responsibilities Board (the Board), will review exit strategies to ensure a smooth transition for the communities, and will consider what priorities to set for its final year of operations to best capitalise on the gains achieved to date.

The Commission looks forward to building upon its existing partnerships in quarter 18 and continuing to support the empowerment of the individuals and families living in the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge.

Table of contents

1. Activities and Trends	4
2. Observations, Challenges and Future Direction	12
3. Financial Operations	12

Abbreviations

CIM	Conditional Income Management
CYWR	Cape York Welfare Reform
DETE	Department of Education, Training and Employment
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
VIM	Voluntary Income Management
Also:	
	Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)
	<i>Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008</i> (the Act)
	Family Responsibilities Commission Registry (the Registry)
	Family Responsibilities Board (the Board)

Family Responsibilities Commission Cape York Welfare Reforms

Report to 30 September 2012.

1. Activities and Trends

Notices

In quarter 17 the Commission received **1,206 agency notices**¹. Some individuals may have been the subject of more than one agency notice. Of that figure 862 notices (71 percent) were within the Commission's jurisdiction and 344 notices (29 percent) were outside the Commission's jurisdiction.

Within jurisdiction notices comprised of:

270	Magistrates Court notices
550	School Attendance notices
39	Child Safety and Welfare notices
3	Housing Tenancy notices

Of the 344 notices not within the Commission's jurisdiction, there were 274 Magistrates Court notices, 64 School Attendance notices and 6 Child Safety and Welfare notices.

Details of notices within jurisdiction for each community are set out below:

- **Aurukun's 447** notices constitute **51.9 percent** of the total notices in jurisdiction across the four CYWR trial communities:

128	Magistrates Court notices
302	School Attendance notices
17	Child Safety and Welfare notices

Five Magistrates Court notices and 10 School Attendance notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

- **Coen's 56** notices constitute **6.5 percent** of the total notices in jurisdiction:

19	Magistrates Court notices
35	School Attendance notices
2	Child Safety and Welfare notices

Two Magistrates Court and 14 School Attendance notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

¹ Counting rules are that an agency notice is counted on the basis of number of 'clients' on the notice. For example a child safety and welfare notice relating to two parents is counted as two notices.

- **Hope Vale's 293** notices constitute **34.0 percent** of the total notices in jurisdiction:

88	Magistrates Court notices
191	School Attendance notices
14	Child Safety and Welfare notices

Twelve Magistrates Court notices, 40 School Attendance notices and 4 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

- **Mossman Gorge's 66** notices constitute **7.6 percent** of the total notices in jurisdiction:

35	Magistrates Court notices
22	School Attendance notices
6	Child Safety and Welfare notices
3	Housing Tenancy notices

Two hundred and fifty-five Magistrates Court notices and 2 Child Safety and Welfare notices were processed as not within jurisdiction.

Since its commencement the Commission has received 11,531 agency notices within its jurisdiction. Total notices increased from 1004 in quarter 16 to 1206 in quarter 17. Of those notices in jurisdiction, Magistrates Court, School Attendance and Child Safety and Welfare notices increased, whilst Housing Tenancy notices decreased.

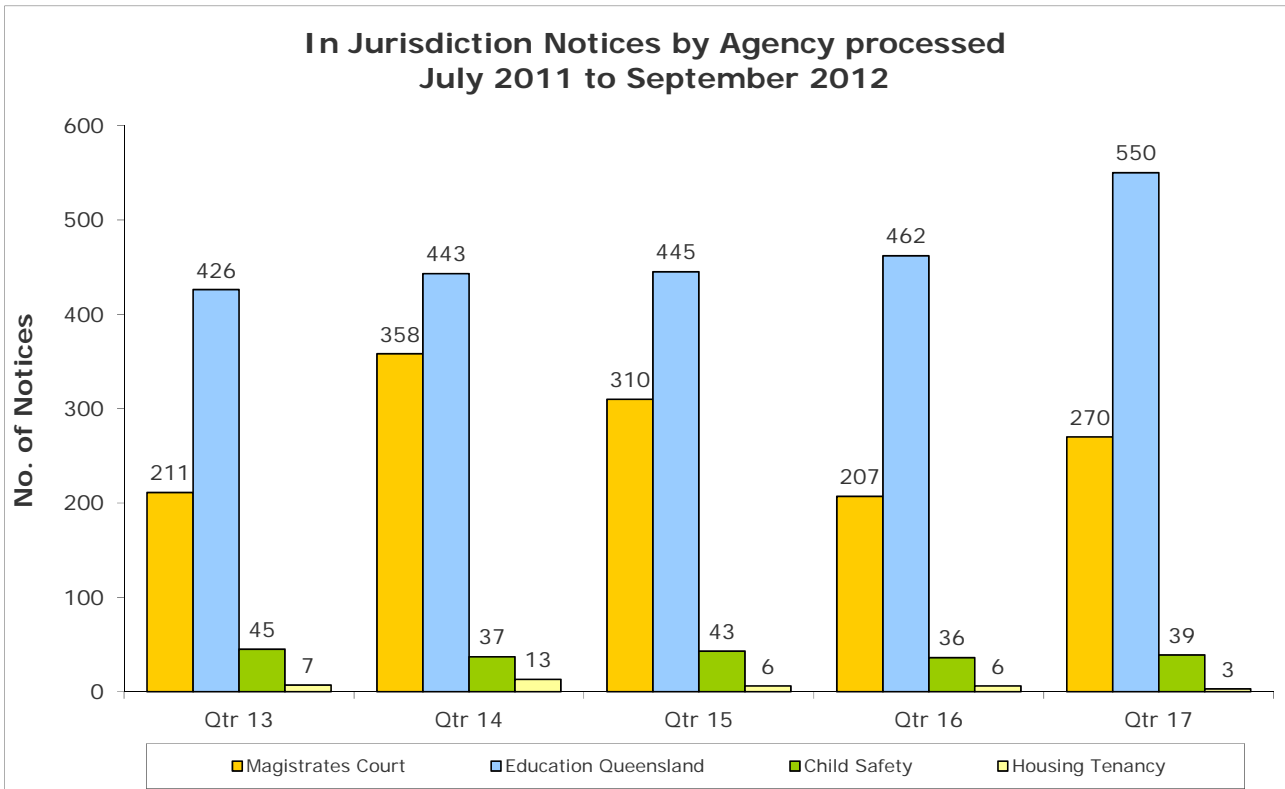
Magistrates Court notices increased this quarter to 270 from the 207 received in the previous quarter. Aurukun increased by 55 notices, Hope Vale increased by 20 notices and Mossman Gorge increased by 16 notices. Coen decreased by 28 notices.

School Attendance notices increased from 462 in quarter 16 to 550 in quarter 17. All communities experienced an increased in notices for the quarter. Aurukun notices increased by 21, Coen notices increased by 18, Hope Vale notices increased by 35 and Mossman Gorge increased by 14.

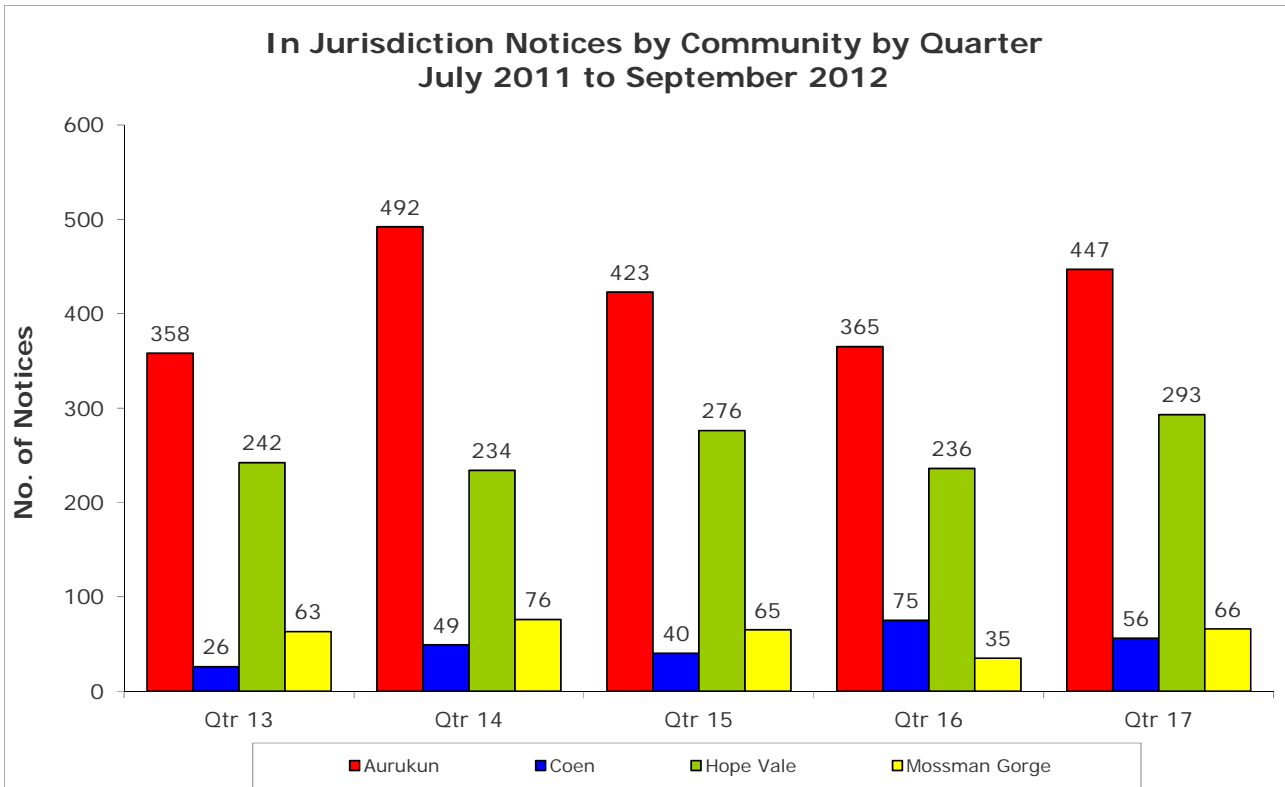
Child Safety and Welfare notices increased from 36 in quarter 16 to 39 in quarter 17. Aurukun, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge increased by 6 notices, 2 notices and 4 notices respectively whilst Coen decreased by 9 notices.

Housing Tenancy notices decreased to 3 from the 6 received in the previous quarter. Mossman Gorge recorded a decrease of 3 notices, whilst no notices were received for Aurukun, Coen and Hope Vale.

The Commission receives school attendance data from the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE). The release of relevant data relating to quarter 17 was not available at the time of writing this report, however, the available data provided by DETE is published on the Commission's web page at <http://www.frcq.org.au>.

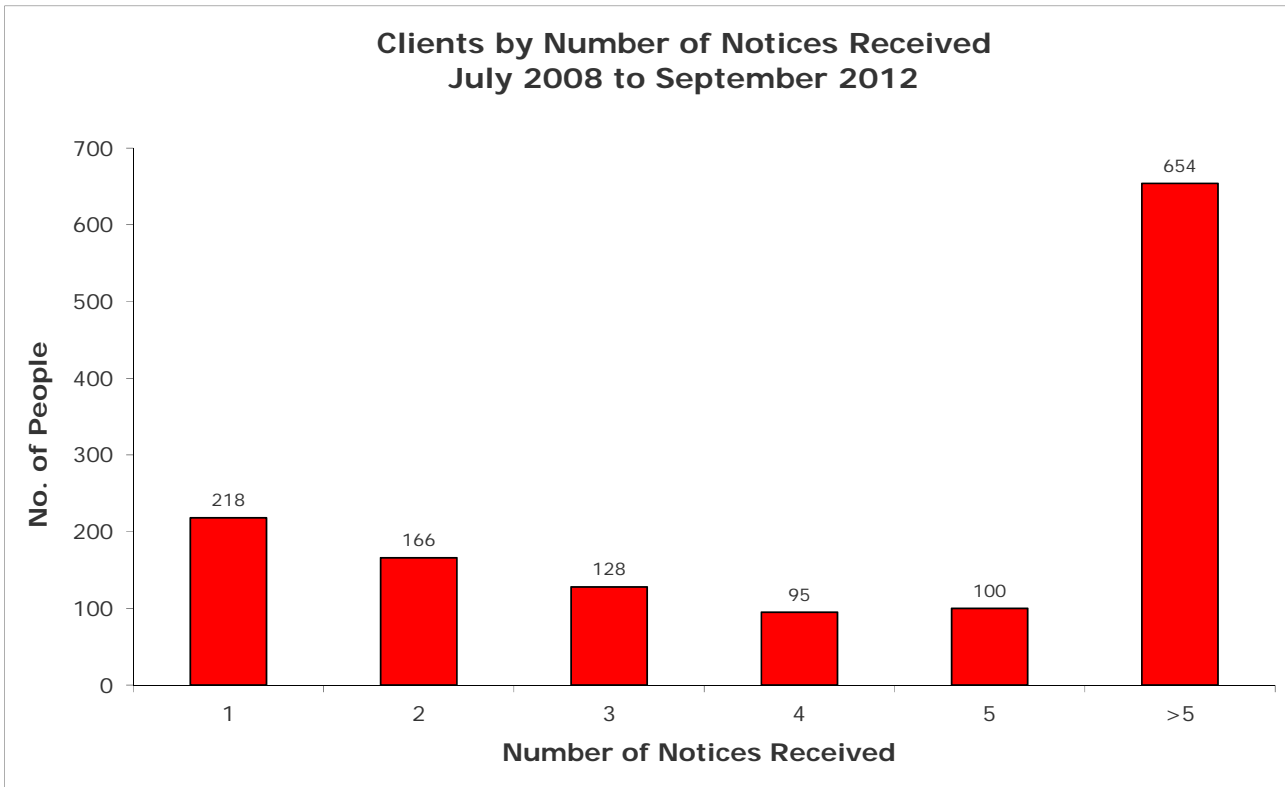


Graph 1: In jurisdiction notices by type and quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.



Graph 2: In jurisdiction notices by community and quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

Over the life of the Commission 84.0 percent of clients have received more than one notice with 48.1 percent of clients receiving more than five notices. Frequently this illustrates multiple child school absences for the one family or multiple Magistrates Court notices relating to one incident. To date, 16.0 percent of clients have received only one notice.



Graph 3: FRC clients by number of notices 1 July 2008 to 30 September 2012.

(Note: Counting rules stipulate that where multiple charges are received each charge is counted as an individual notice or each child’s absence is counted as one notice – i.e. if three children from the one family were absent, that was counted as three notices).

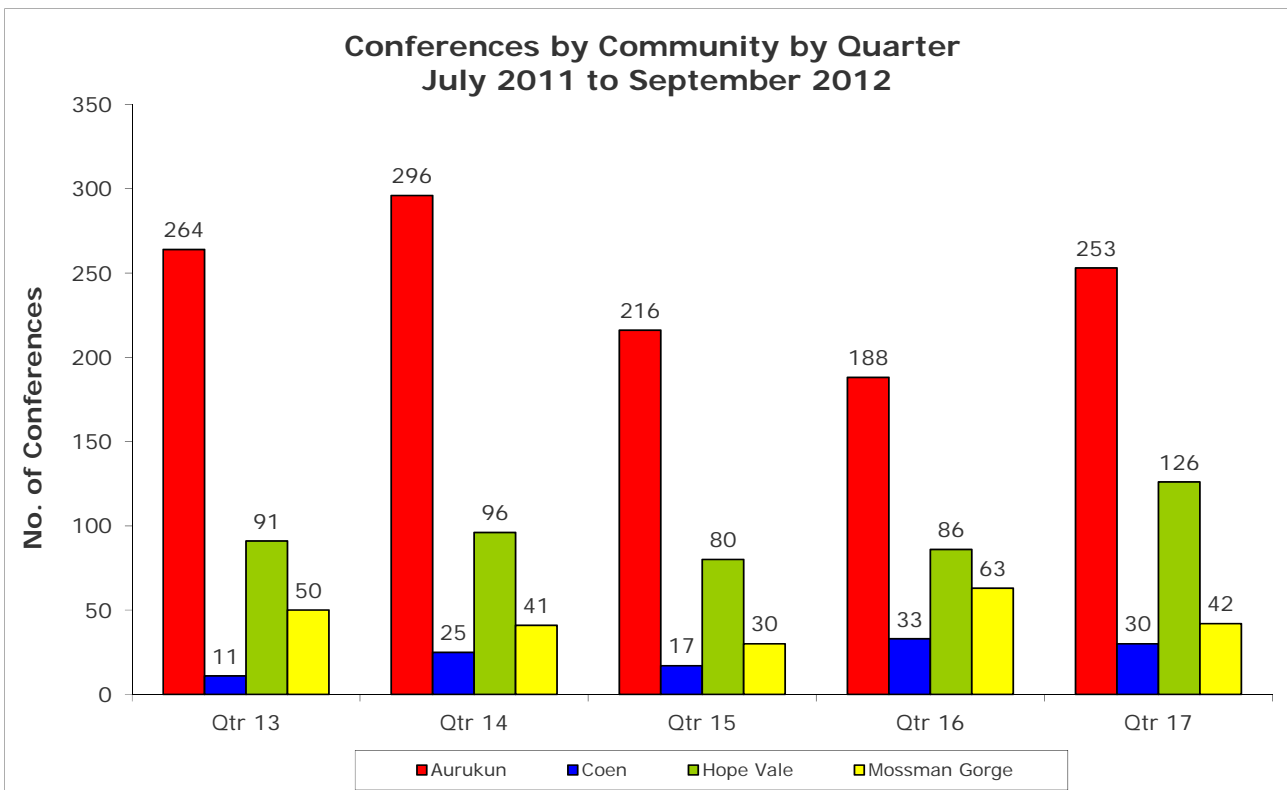
Conferences

Four hundred and fifty one conferences² were held across the four communities in quarter 17 resulting in 1 FRA being entered into, 50 Orders made to attend community support services and 97 CIM orders as well as no further action, rescheduling and scheduling to return for review with compliance. Twenty-eight new clients were conferenced during the quarter. Details of conferencing activity in each community for quarter 17 are as follows:

- 253 conferences were held in Aurukun
- 30 conferences were held in Coen
- 126 conferences were held in Hope Vale
- 42 conferences were held in Mossman Gorge.

Conferences increased from 370 in quarter 16 to 451 in quarter 17.

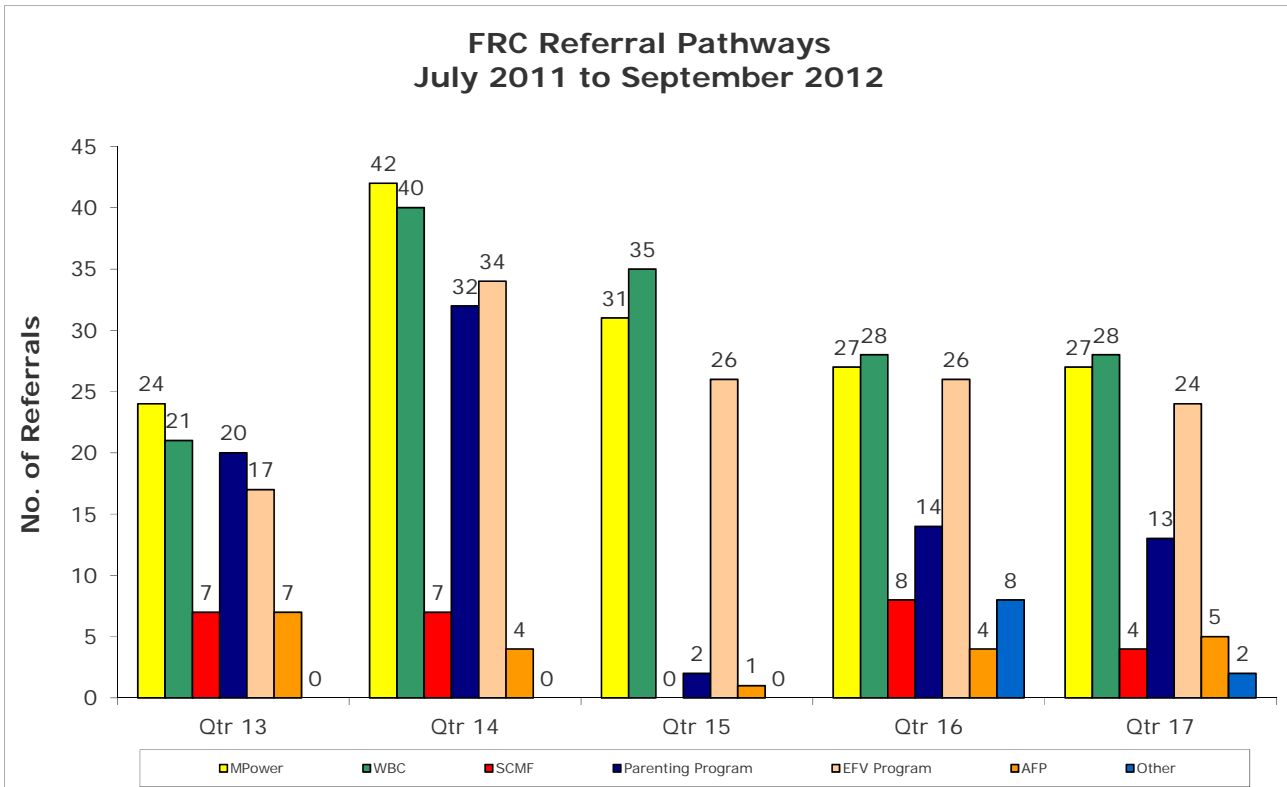
² The number of conferences held relates to the number of conferences listed, which includes where a client was served with a Notice to Attend Conference and subsequently failed to attend.



Graph 4: Conferences by community and quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

Referrals

Referrals to service providers decreased from 115 in quarter 16 to 103 in quarter 17, relating to 54 clients. Since commencement the Commission has referred 702 clients to service providers resulting in approximately 51.2 percent of clients on 12 month service referral plans. Referrals in the communities during the quarter were as follows: Aurukun decreased by 3; Coen increased by 6; Hope Vale increased by 7; and Mossman Gorge decreased by 22.



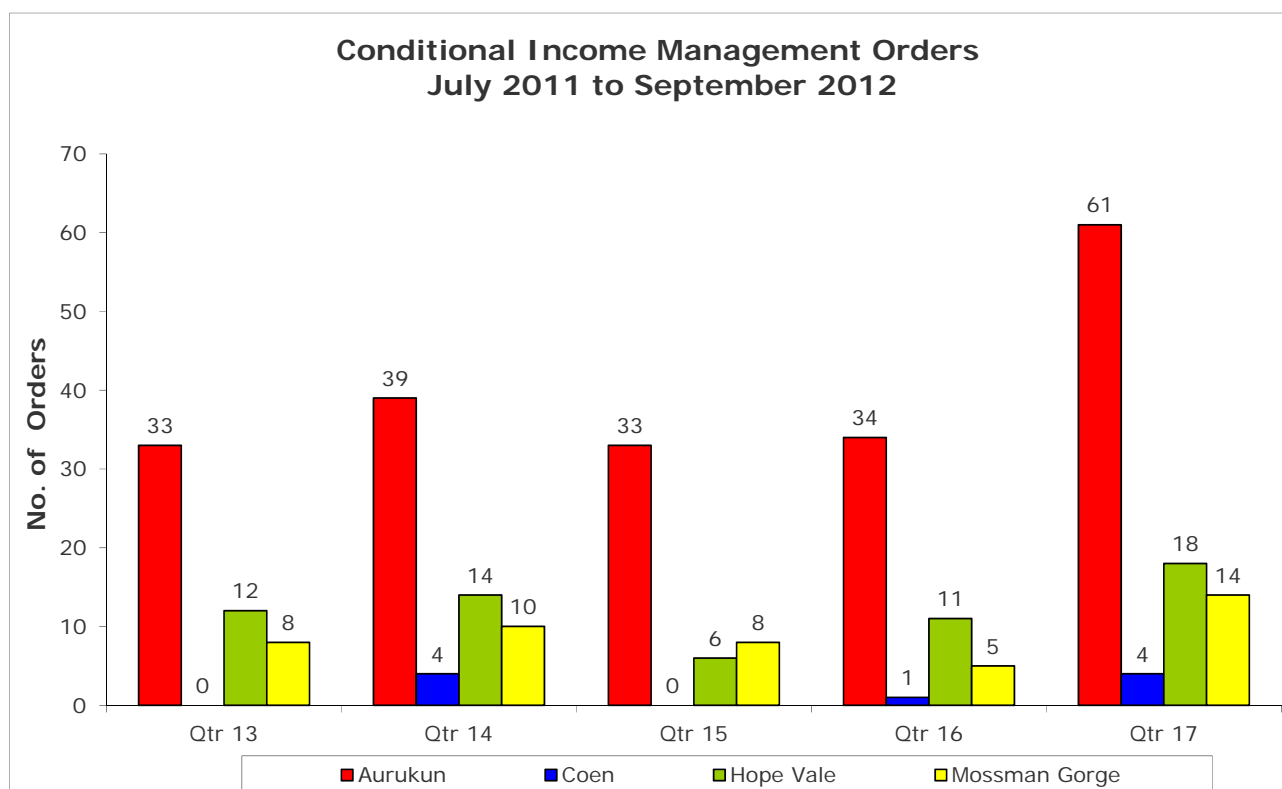
Graph 5: Referral Pathways by Referral Type and Quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

Conditional Income Management

Ninety-seven CIM orders were made in quarter 17, an increase of 46 from quarter 16. Since the commencement of the Commission 859 CIM orders inclusive of original orders, extensions and amendments have been made relating to 496 clients. During the quarter an increase was experienced in all four communities. Aurukun increased by 27, Coen increased by 3, Hope Vale increased by 7 whilst Mossman Gorge increased by 9 orders for the quarter.

Commissioners report that many clients have been given numerous opportunities to attend conference or take action to have CIM orders amended (such as attend service providers) and have refused. As at 30 September 2012, 36.2 percent of the Commission's clients have been subject to a CIM order over the past four and a quarter years. As at 30 September 2012 there are 199 clients subject to a CIM order which equates to 14.5 percent of clients and 11.9 percent of CYWR trial population³ on a CIM order at a point in time.

Since the commencement of the Commission in 2008, 53 VIM agreements have been processed relating to 48 clients. Those clients that request a VIM agreement use income management as a savings and budget tool, often for a specified period and to deter family members from accessing their savings.



Graph 6: Conditional Income Management Orders by Community and Quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

Case Management

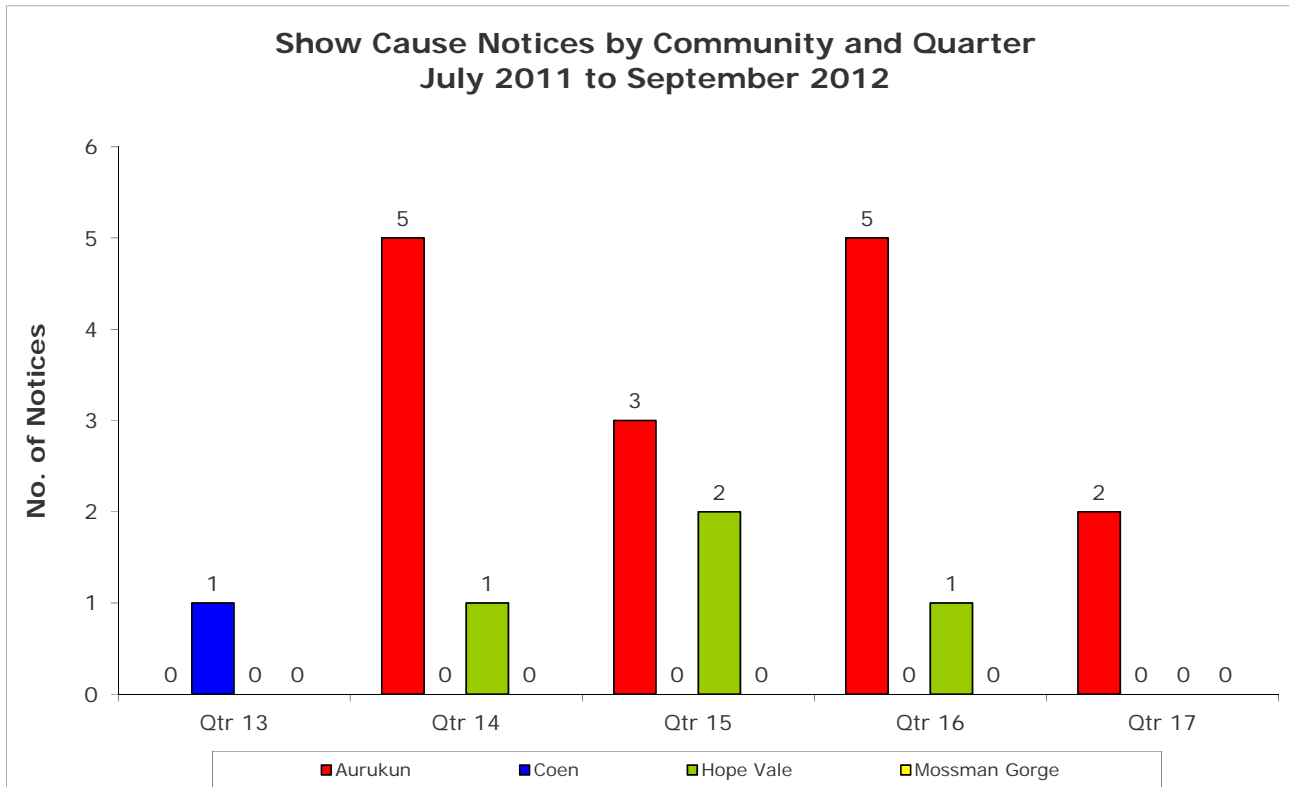
As at 30 September 2012, 193 clients were being case managed, an increase from 175 in quarter 16. Since the last quarter the number of clients being case managed in Aurukun and Coen has increased by 11 and 12 respectively, while Hope Vale decreased by 5 and Mossman Gorge remained unchanged.

³ Total ABS Estimated Resident Population as at 30 June 2010 for adults aged 17 years and over in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge is 1,669 as supplied by the Office of Economic Statistical Research.

Show Cause Notices

During quarter 17, 2 Show Cause hearings were held in Aurukun. These matters resulted in:

- 1 Client Income Managed and ordered to comply with a case plan
- 1 Client Income Managed



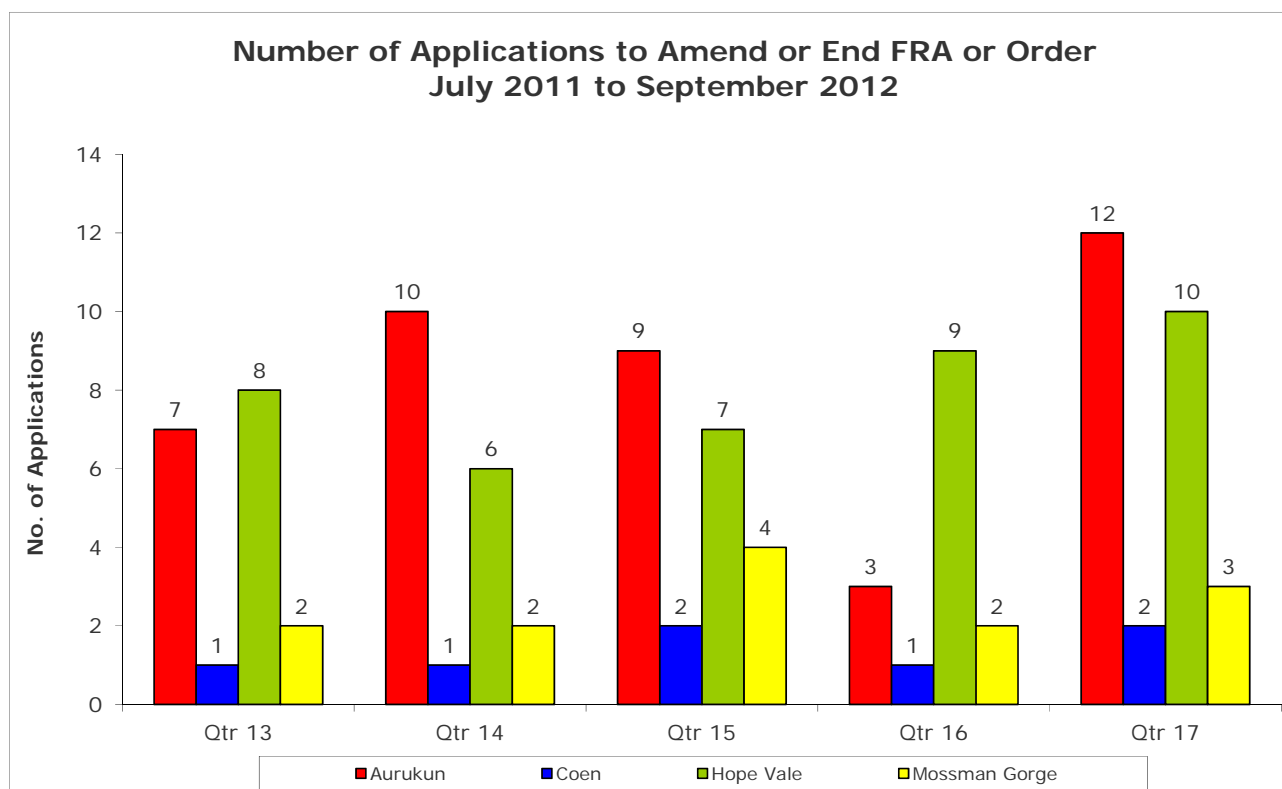
Graph 7: Show Cause Notices by community and quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

Applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders

Twenty-seven Applications to Amend or End a Family Responsibilities Agreement or Order were received in quarter 17, an increase of 12 from quarter 16. Outcomes of the 27 applications received are as follows:

- 12 Income Management agreements and orders revoked
- 10 Applications dismissed
- 3 Applications received at the end of the quarter, decisions pending
- 1 Income Management order revoked and client ordered to comply with a case plan
- 1 Application rescheduled.

The Commission views the figures for applications to amend or end agreements or orders as an indication of client confidence in the Commission to provide a fair, just and equitable process.



Graph 8: Applications to Amend or End FRA or Order by community and quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012.

2. Future Direction and Challenges

Future Direction

The Commission welcomed the announcement by the Queensland Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, the Honourable Glen Elmes MP, extending the CYWR trial until 1 January 2014. Amendments to the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act) to allow for the operations of the Commission to continue until 1 January 2014 are currently being considered by Parliament. The extension of the Commission will allow further opportunity to consolidate the gains achieved by the Commissioners in community and will also provide time for the results of an independent evaluation of the trial to be considered in determining future welfare reform initiatives.

3. Financial Operations

Governance

Part 12 of the Act provides for the establishment of 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 Jon Grayson Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Mr Noel Pearson Director, Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership
- Mr Finn Pratt Secretary, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Operational

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

The Registry, managed by the Registrar, provides corporate and operational support to the Commissioner, the Local Commissioners and the Local Coordinators.

Financial

The total funding budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year is \$3.3 million, \$1.5 million from the Australian Government and \$1.8 million from the Queensland Government.

Income:

- Income received by the Commission for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012 totalled \$1.514 million. This income consisted of:
 - \$1.0 million received from the Queensland Government
 - \$0.5 million received from the Australian Government
 - \$0.007 million received in interest

- \$0.007 million received in sundry revenue.

The balance of available funds in the bank as at 30 September 2012 is \$1.213 million and the balance of receivables is \$1.0 million.

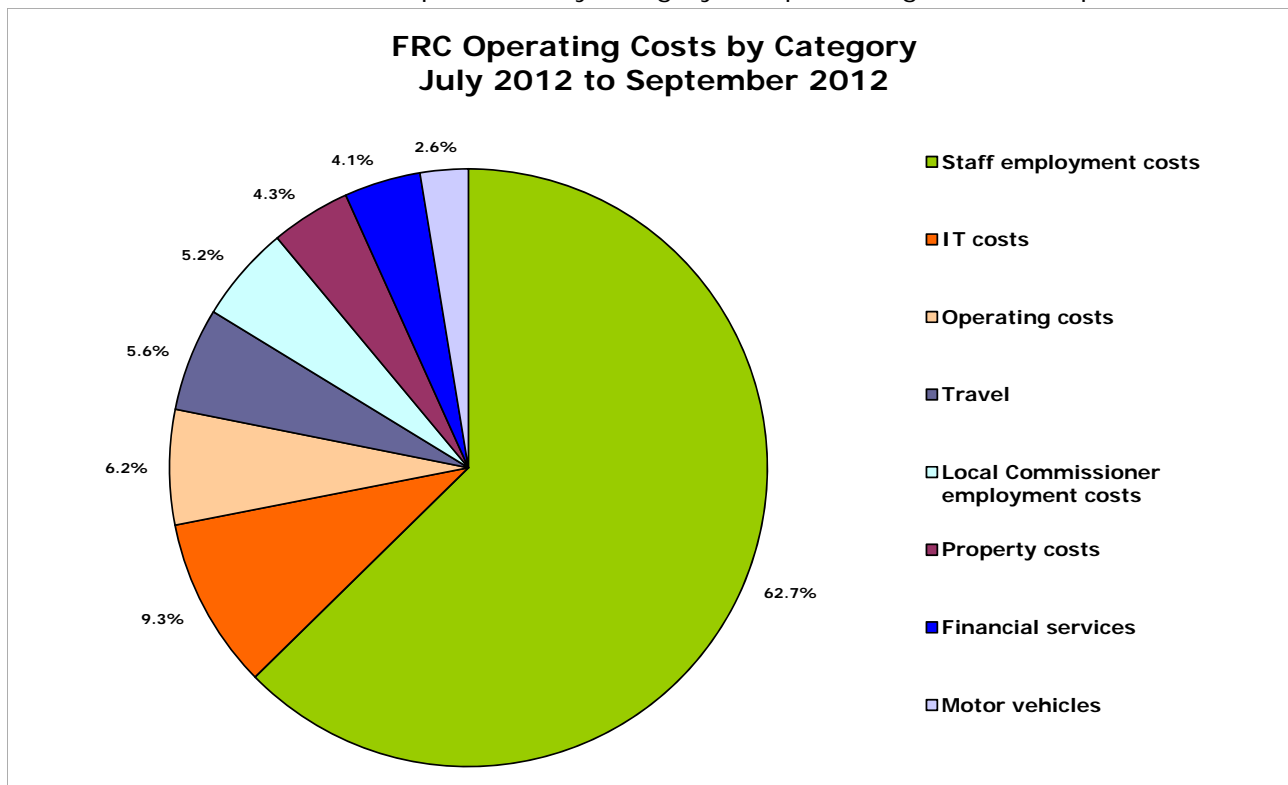
Expenditure:

- Expenditure for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012 was \$0.868 million (Table 2). This total represents 21 percent of the projected annual expenditure of \$4.135 million as stated in the 2012-13 projected expenditure and disclosed in the Queensland State Budget 2012-13 Service Delivery Statements.

1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012	Expenditure Qtr 17	1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012	Expenditure Qtr 17
Salaries and recruitment	\$544,318	Property costs	\$37,519
IT costs	\$80,554	Financial services	\$35,921
Operating costs	\$54,029	Motor vehicles	\$22,520
Travel	\$48,128		
Local Commissioner employment	\$45,330	Total	\$868,320

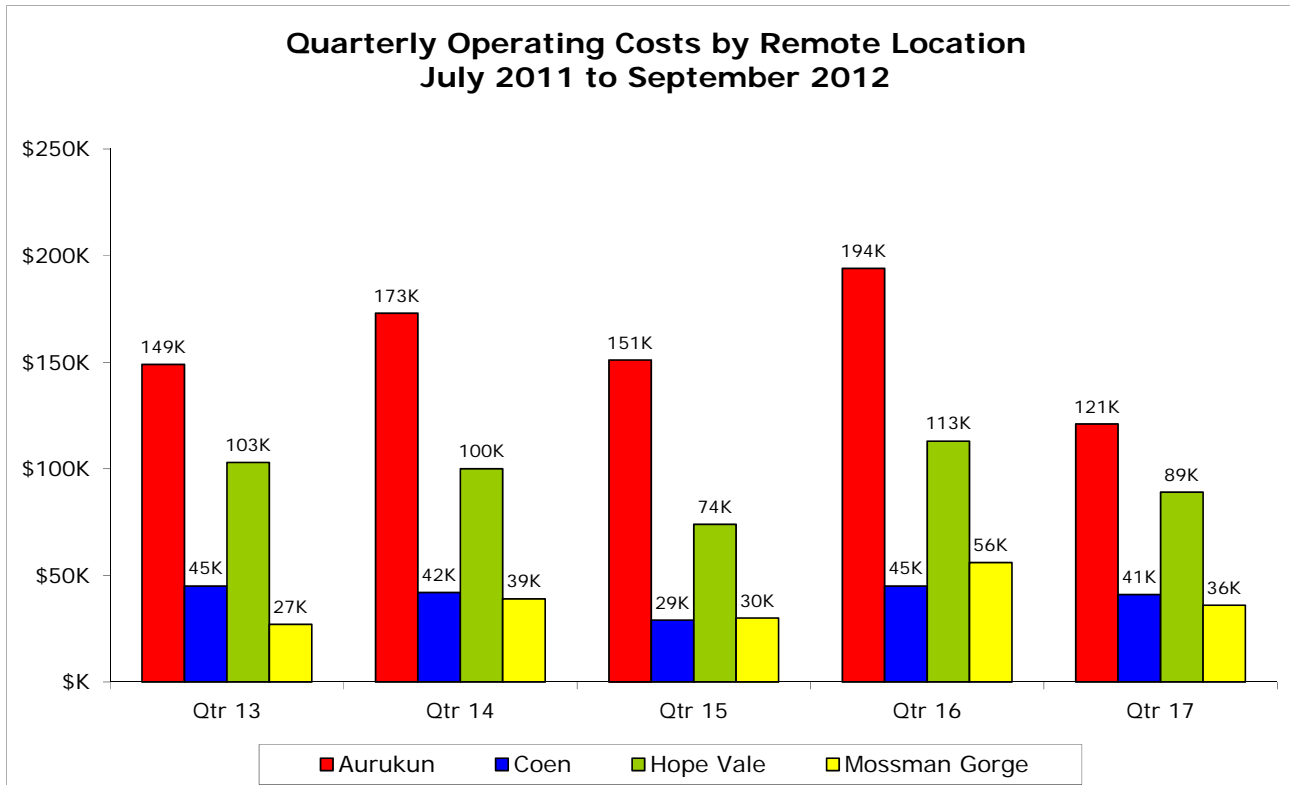
Table 2: Unaudited expenditure in quarter 17.

Quarter 17 disbursement of expenditure by category and percentage of total expenditure.



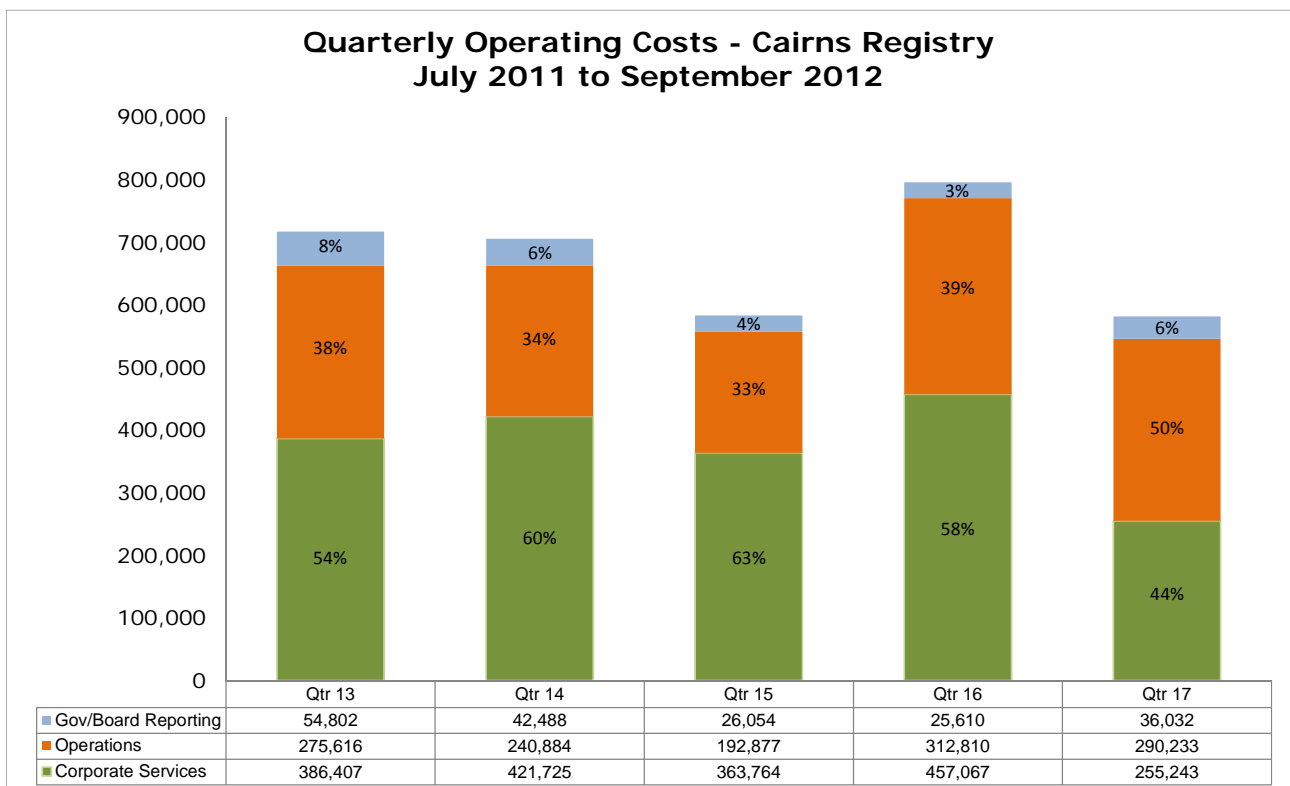
Graph 9: Total FRC Operating Costs 1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012

Regional operational expenditure by location and quarter.



Graph 10: Operating Costs by remote location 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012

Cairns Registry expenditure for quarter 17 compared to the previous four quarters.



Graph 11: Quarterly Operating Costs Cairns 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2012

APPENDIX A



DRAFT SITTING CALENDAR 2012

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION



1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012

WEEK COMMENCING	Commissioner	COEN Mon	AURUKUN Tues/Wed/Thurs	HOPE VALE Tues/Wed	MOSSMAN GORGE Thurs	OFFICE CAIRNS
2 JANUARY	DRG					Office week
9 JANUARY	DRG					Office week
16 JANUARY	DRG					Office week
23 JANUARY	DRG				Public Holiday	26 Australia Day 23, 24, 25, 27
30 JANUARY	DRG		31, 1, 2			30 Jan, 3 Feb
6 FEBRUARY	DRG			7, 8	9	6, 10
13 FEBRUARY	DRG	13	14, 15, 16			17
20 FEBRUARY	DRG			21, 22	23	20, 24 20 FR Board Meeting
27 FEBRUARY	DRG		28, 29, 1			27 Feb, 2 March
5 MARCH	DRG			6, 7		5, 8, 9
12 MARCH	DRG		13, 14, 15			12, 16
19 MARCH	DRG			20, 21	22	19, 22, 23
26 MARCH	DRG	26	27, 28, 29			30
2 APRIL	DRG				3	6 Good Friday
9 APRIL	DRG	Public Holiday				9 Easter Monday
16 APRIL	DRG	16	17, 18, 19			20
23 APRIL	DRG			23, 24 25 Public Holiday	26	25 ANZAC Day 27
30 APRIL	DRG		1, 2, 3			30 April, 1, 2, 3, 4 May
7 MAY	DRG	Public Holiday				7 May Day Holiday Commissioner Week
14 MAY	DRG			15, 16	17	14, 18 14 FR Board Meeting
21 MAY	DRG	21	22, 23, 24			25 21 FR Board Meeting
28 MAY	DRG			29, 30	31	28 May, 1 June
4 JUNE	DRG		5, 6, 7			4, 8
11 JUNE	DRG	Public Holiday		12, 13	14	11 Queen's Birthday 15
18 JUNE	DRG	18	19, 20, 21			22
25 JUNE	DRG					Office week



DRAFT SITTING CALENDAR 2012 FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION



1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012

WEEK COMMENCING	Commissioner	COEN Mon	AURUKUN Tues/Wed/Thurs	HOPE VALE Tues/Wed	MOSSMAN GORGE Thurs	OFFICE CAIRNS
2 JULY	DRG					Office week NAIDOC Week
9 JULY	DRG			10, 11	12	9, 12, 13
16 JULY	DRG	16	17, 18, 19			20 Cairns Show Day
23 JULY	RC			24, 25	26	23, 25, 27
30 JULY	DRG		31, 1, 2			30 July, 3 August
6 AUGUST	RC			7, 8	9	6, 10 8 FR Board Meeting
13 AUGUST	DRG	13	14, 15, 16			17
20 AUGUST	DRG			21, 22		20, 23, 24
27 AUGUST	DRG		28, 29, 30			27, 31 27 FR Board Meeting
3 SEPTEMBER	DRG			4, 5	6	3, 7
10 SEPTEMBER	DRG	10	11, 12, 13			14
17 SEPTEMBER	DRG			18, 19		17, 20, 21
24 SEPTEMBER	DRG					Office Week
1 OCTOBER	DRG	Public Holiday			4	1 Queen's Birthday extra
8 OCTOBER	DRG		9, 10, 11			8, 12
15 OCTOBER	DRG			16, 17	18	15, 19 16/17 Estimates
22 OCTOBER	DRG	22	23, 24, 25			26
29 OCTOBER	DRG			30, 31		29 Oct, 1, 2 Nov
5 NOVEMBER	DRG		6, 7, 8			5, 9 5 FR Board Meeting
12 NOVEMBER	DRG			13, 14	15	12, 16
19 NOVEMBER	DRG	19	20, 21, 22			23 19 FR Board Meeting
26 NOVEMBER	DRG			27, 28		26, 29, 30
3 DECEMBER	DRG		4, 5, 6			3, 7
10 DECEMBER	DRG			11, 12	13	10, 14
17 DECEMBER	DRG					Office Week
24 DECEMBER	DRG		Public Holiday	Public Holiday		27, 28 Office closed for Xmas
31 DECEMBER	DRG		Public Holiday			31 Office closed for Xmas