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Family Responsibilities Board

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

Section 123 of the FRC Act states that the FR Board must meet every six months. The meeting may be held by using any technology available which will allow for efficient and effective communication, however, the Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the Board is comprised of two members. A full description of the meetings of the FR Board can be found at page 99.

Composition of the Board

The FR Board members as at 30 June 2017 were:

Ms Clare O'Connor	Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships as the Chair
Mr Troy Sloan	First Assistant Secretary, Policy, Analysis and Evaluation Division, Indigenous Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Mr Noel Pearson	Founder, Cape York Partnership as the Executive Chairman, representing the Cape York Institute.

Executive Management Team

The Commission's EMT is comprised of the Commissioner, the Registrar, the Client Manager and the Finance Manager. The EMT plays a critical role in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission by:

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

Due to the small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commission's operational performance. In addition the EMT oversees the operations of finance, information management, human resources and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2016-17 year.

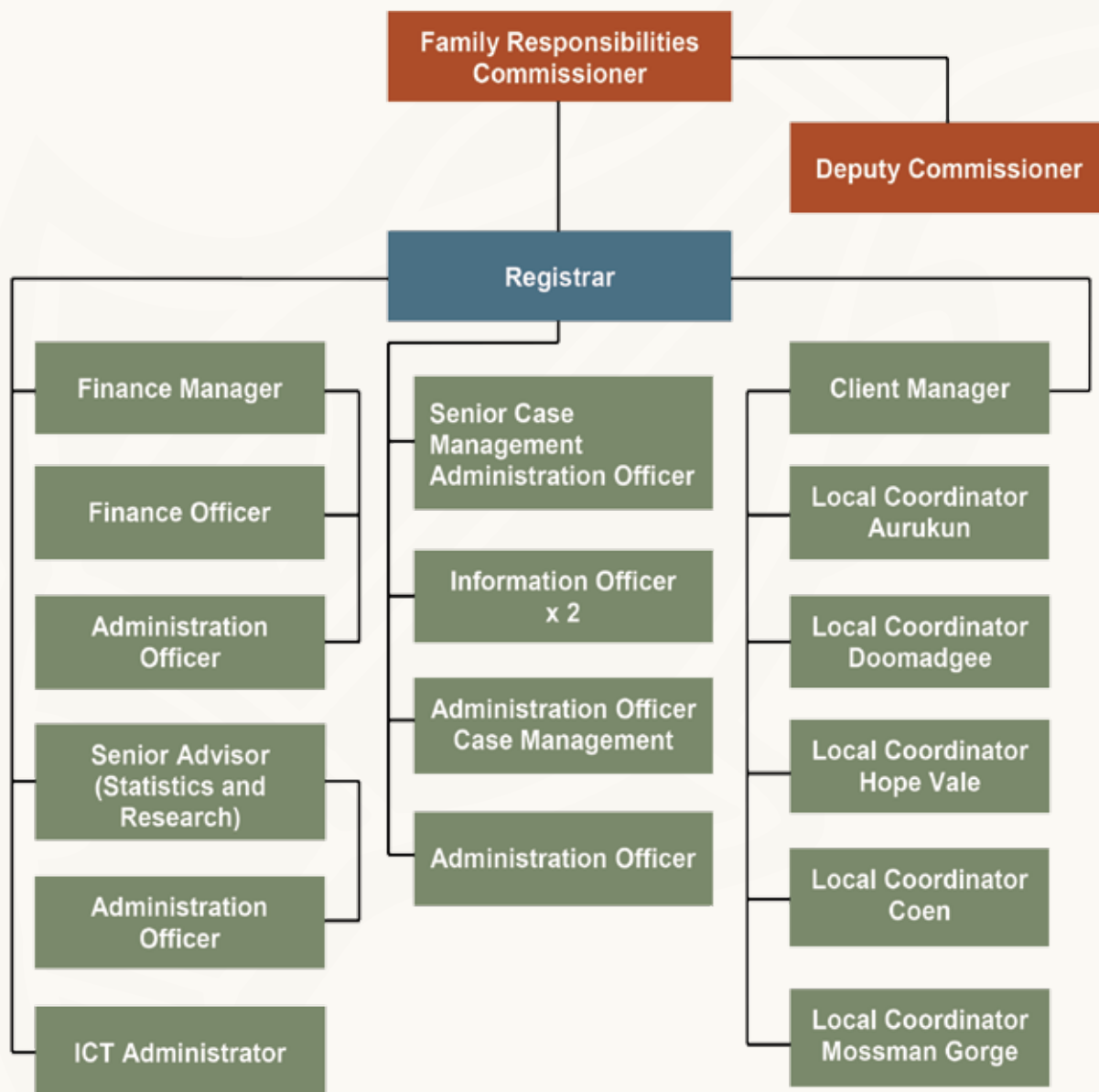
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Corporate structure

The Commission's organisational structure includes a central registry office based in Cairns and a remote office in each of the welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Each of the Commission's remote community based offices has a Local Coordinator appointed to provide strategic, operational and administrative support to the Local Commissioners.

The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are appointed by the Governor in Council under the FRC Act until 1 January 2018.





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Planning

The Commission has adopted a strategic plan which clearly defines the strategic outcomes sought by the Commission, the strategic objectives which are specifically tied to these outcomes and the strategies it will employ to achieve its objectives. The strategic outcomes of improved community wellbeing and improved community responsibility set out what the Commission wishes to achieve. The strategic objectives relate to specific targets and processes by which the Commission seeks to achieve its outcomes. The Commission's direction is consistent with, and guided by, current whole-of-government priorities, including targets set by COAG under NIRA and other key financial, socio-economic and demographic challenges identified through research and consultation. The strategic plan is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure currency of performance measures and that objectives adequately reflect the Commission's vision and purpose. A copy of the Strategic Plan can be found on page 15.

Participation in external governance groups

In addition to the internal governance arrangements of the Commission, the Commissioner and other delegated employees participate regularly in interagency meetings and governance groups. In particular individual monthly meetings are conducted separately between the Commission, and its strategic partners DATSIP, CYP and DPMC. These meetings enhance interagency collaboration and focus on common goals.

In addition, regular meetings are held between the Commission and community service providers to focus on seamless service provision for Commission clients, to fill in gaps where they occur and to maintain up-to-date knowledge on agency services, ensuring responsiveness to both client and community needs.

Human resource management

At 30 June 2017 the Commission had an employee establishment of 17.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, including positions servicing the regional communities. Fourteen positions are based in the Cairns registry office (including one part-time position and one Local Coordinator servicing Coen and Mossman Gorge). Regional positions include one Local Coordinator based in Aurukun, one Local Coordinator based in Hope Vale and two Local Coordinators based in Doomadgee (one a trainee). The Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are employed on a fee for service basis.

Workforce Profile

- Of the 17.4 FTEs, 12 are permanent staff, 4.4 are temporary staff and 1 is on a set contract term (FRC Commissioner's tenure is set by the Governor in Council)
- 11.5 percent of our workforce is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 69 percent of our workforce are women
- 23 percent of our workforce reside in remote communities

Since the establishment of the Commission employee and job classification levels have altered from time to time as a result of operational reviews. During this financial year the Commission has experienced a permanent separation rate of zero percent.



The Commission promotes policies and activities to support a healthy work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements are actively accessed and employees are provided the opportunity to work from home where appropriate. Part-time or job share work opportunities exist, and hours of work arrangements including the opportunity for purchased leave are available. These flexible arrangements are also offered in order to assist in balancing work and carer roles where required. Employees are also encouraged to use their annual leave.

To prevent the onset of desk-related neck, back, shoulder, elbow and wrist injuries, and to manage symptoms which may already exist, the Commission offers employees access to ergonomic specialist services. This year ergonomic assessments were offered to employees by a professionally qualified occupational therapist in April 2017. Individual assessments were provided for those employees who expressed a need for an ergonomic review of their work stations, and recommendations to improve the working environment have been complied with.

There were no formal complaints of bullying or harassment during the financial year. Quarterly reports on complaints and investigations are provided to the Public Service Commission as part of the whole-of-government reporting requirements.

Recruitment, selection and retention of employees

The Commission conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008* and relevant Public Service Commission policies and directives. New employees are welcomed through the Commission's on-line induction process which provides information in regard to the Commission and links to all human resource policies. Each is mentored by a staff member to assist them to become familiar with the Commission and what is expected of them in their role.

On 5 August 2014 the Family Responsibilities Commission Amendment Bill 2014 was introduced into Parliament. The Bill proposed various amendments aimed at increasing efficiencies and expanding operations. One of these amendments was to omit section 152 from the FRC Act. Section 152 was the sunset clause which provided that the FRC Act would cease on a specified date. On 14 October 2014 the Bill was passed by the Queensland Parliament and the FRC Act was proclaimed on 28 November 2014.

Subsequent to the removal of the sunset clause and to comply with the provisions of s149 of the *Public Service Act 2008* and Queensland Public Service Commission Directives 20/10 Temporary employment and 17/16 Supporting employees affected by workplace change, two employees occupying ongoing and funded positions were transitioned to tenure after having cleared the employees requiring placement pool.

During the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.

Professional development

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on a continual basis to ensure it actively works to restore local authority. Part of this professional development involves enhancing and expanding upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, service providers, government departments and agencies. The Local Commissioners attended their annual development week in Cairns commencing on 2 May 2017 during which they met with senior staff from several organisations including QPS, DATSIP and CYP. Some of the special presentations were provided by His Honour Judge Harrison in regard to sentencing and judicial procedures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people, Michael McFarlane, General



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Manager from Lotus Glen together with senior staff, in regard to what can be offered to ATSI prisoners to make them “better people not better prisoners”, and the Cape York Girl Academy at Wangetti Beach who provide individual learning programs for girls disengaged from the education system. Girls are given the opportunity to complete their secondary schooling and to achieve a variety of vocational qualifications and school-based traineeships in a flexible learning atmosphere to suit mothers and babies.

Specific training was also provided during the development week for the Local Commissioners in managing aggressive behaviour and personal safety with a particular focus on how to prevent or defuse volatile situations, awareness of harmful environments and how to reduce risk.

Participation in the consultations and workshops allowed the Local Commissioners to tackle common issues, review strategies and source solutions. A comprehensive summary of the development week can be found in this annual report entitled ‘Local Commissioner Development Week’.

The broader focus of the Commission’s professional development program for employees is on skills development, career enhancement, and supporting a culture of ongoing learning through participation in internal workshops, on the job training and courses conducted by specialist external training providers. All Commission employees have been registered for the online iLearning courses provided by DCCSDS. This online learning service provides training in Ethical Decision-Making, Harvard ManageMentor and executive development online courses including webinars for team leaders, supervisors and managers on a range of topics, a mentoring program for senior officers and managers, finance and procurement fundamentals and a Lead.Perform Hub. The Lead.Perform Hub provides leadership and performance development information, resources and learning opportunities for emerging leaders, operational leaders and senior leaders. The hub is designed to enable collaboration and learning where employees can access learning activities, videos and program information to develop leadership and supervision practice, knowledge and skills. A Psychological Health Safety and Wellbeing course is also available which offers training and awareness on psychological wellbeing in the workplace. Information on common psychological conditions that impact on work performance and appropriate employee support options are canvassed in this course. These are but a few of the training opportunities offered.

To facilitate employees’ development, each employee together with their manager signs a Performance and Development Agreement. The agreement sets out identified learning activities, supports the development of competencies, professional skills and personal attributes, and is designed to identify and record knowledge and skills gaps together with learning objectives. The plans link in with the Commission’s strategic objectives and are reviewed on a six monthly basis. During 2016-17 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$16,018 excluding travel costs. This investment provides a platform for the Commission to foster the development of new skills and to improve business processes within the Commission.

During 2016-17 the Commission organised a number of training programs and workshops to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve operations, internal administration and service delivery of the Commission. Training programs covered the key areas of:

- Attache Sprint Training
- Cert IV in Work Health and Safety
- Employee Assistance Program worklifeAssist Seminar
- financial reporting training
- fire warden and trial evacuation

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- first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation including defibrillation
- Indigenous Economic Development Forum
- leadership training and team building
- Managing Aggressive Behaviour and Personal Safety (resilience and self-care)
- Non-Adversarial Justice: Integrating Theory and Practice
- Public Interest Disclosure Introductory Workshop
- Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct and Ethical Decision-Making
- taxation and payroll training
- Think Outcomes – measuring social outcomes
- Writing for Policy Results Workshop.

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

Under the Commission's Study and Research Assistance Scheme (SARAS) policy financial assistance and leave arrangements are administered subject to Directive 9/13 Special Leave in an equitable manner, ensuring effective usage of learning and organisational development funds, and taking into consideration available resources. As at June 2017 there are two employees enrolled for the current 2017 calendar year to study the following:

- Bachelor of Social Work
- Certificate IV in Accounting.

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

Information and communication technology

Coinciding with the establishment of the Commission in July 2008 a service level agreement was entered into with the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) for information and communication technology services. This agreement ensures that the Commission complies with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, whilst providing a high level of security and support.

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

Since the inception of the Commission in 2008, substantial developments in the field of communications and computing have driven the need for the Commission to update and improve its systems and processes. As reported in the 2015-2016 Annual Report in early 2016, the Commission upgraded its CRM database to version 2015 and Structured Query Language server to version 2012 to improve work efficiencies and more effectively manage the database. This upgrade provided a more flexible foundation from which to adapt to the varying requirements of the modern workplace and improve work practices.



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Some of the exciting projects which were undertaken during the 2016-17 financial year are outlined below:

- A new client numbering system was implemented for more efficient records management. The unique identification of individuals is essential in both the administration and delivery of the Commission's business.
- The Cairns registry office's data and voice services were migrated to the National Broadband Network / Telstra IP Telephony. Fifteen IP phones were rolled out with this upgrade providing a boost to the Commission's network speed and a more flexible telephone system.
- A redesigned and redeveloped website was introduced with a view to establishing a fresh, professional and more appropriate online representation of our organisation. The new website showcases the communities in which the Commission operates, the Local Commissioners who are the foundation of our community operations, and provides comprehensive information on who we are and the services we provide.
- A Mobile Device Management (MDM) system was implemented to deliver more secure and effective management of mobile devices. The MDM system allows the ICT Administrator to monitor usage of these devices and install Commission approved applications.
- The Commission's mail system was migrated from the on premise server to the cloud. The benefits of this exercise are enhanced security, reliability and usability.
- The Commission commenced the design of a web portal to enable external stakeholders to directly access the database and provide client progress reports in a more comprehensive and timely manner.

Moving forward, the Commission will continually aim to implement innovative and technological driven solutions to work more efficiently whilst complying with best practice principles. A priority of the Commission is to increase its ability to work in a more sustainable 'paper free' environment.

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

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

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 and Code of Conduct

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

Commission employees have completed their annual Code of Conduct training via the DCCSDS iLearning site. The training incorporates the four ethics principles together with their associated values of integrity and impartiality, promoting the public good, commitment to the system of government and accountability and transparency. The Local Coordinators for the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge have also facilitated training for each Local Commissioner. New employees are provided with Code of Conduct and ethics training upon induction, and refresher training is conducted annually for all Commission employees.

To further assist Commission employees with ethical decision-making and in understanding the Code of Conduct, the Commission has a supplementary policy document titled 'Workplace Policy'. This policy presents a broad framework for ethical behaviour, supports the Code and is consistent with

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the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the FRC Act and relevant Public Service Commission policies and directives. The Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy are both available in hard copy at all Commission premises.

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

Public sector values

Customers first	Be courageous
 • Know your customers • Deliver what matters • Make decisions with empathy	 • Own your actions, successes and mistakes • Take calculated risks • Act with transparency
Ideas into action	Empower people
 • Challenge the norm and suggest solutions • Encourage and embrace new ideas • Work across boundaries	 • Lead, empower and trust • Play to everyone's strengths • Develop yourself and those around you
Unleash potential	
 • Expect greatness • Lead and set clear expectations • Seek, provide and act on feedback	



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

Risk management

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

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

External scrutiny

The Commission commenced the year under the oversight responsibility of the Finance and Administration Committee under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.

In February 2017 the Honourable Mark Furner MP for Ferny Grove was appointed as Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Subsequently on 14 February the Legislative Assembly resolved to amend schedule 6 of the Standing Orders which reflect recent Ministerial appointments and associated administrative arrangements. As a result, the Commission's oversight committee transitioned from the Finance and Administration Committee to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee. The committee is responsible for examining Bills to consider policy, examining estimates, assessing the Commission's accounts in regard to integrity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness of financial management and assessing whether the Commission is performing its legislative functions and meeting its obligations as a statutory body. The committee is set to conduct estimates hearings in July 2017.



In the 2017-18 Australian Government budget, funding for income management was extended for the welfare reform communities until 30 June 2019. The Australian Government legislative instrument, *Social Security (Administration) - Queensland Commission (Family Responsibilities Commission) Specification 2015* which enables the implementation of income management orders under the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*, however, was due to expire on 30 June 2017. On 13 June 2017, the Australian Senate referred the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Queensland Commission Income Management Regime) Bill 2017 to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee for inquiry and report. The Bill was passed through the Australian Senate on 20 June 2017, extending income management for a further two years until 30 June 2019, and received Royal Assent on 26 June 2017. Support for the passage of this legislation was based on an agreement to undertake an independent evaluation of Cape York Income Management. The evaluation is expected to commence in the near future.

Professional conduct

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

Policy	Revision Date
SARAS Policy	August 2016
Guide to living and working in Indigenous communities (New)	November 2016
Guidelines for dealing with a traumatic event or critical incident (New)	November 2016
Guidelines to Victims of Crime	November 2016
Rural and Remote Area Incentive Policy	November 2016
Travel Policy	November 2016
Workplace Health and Safety Policy	November 2016
Right to information guidelines	March 2017
Employee Assistance Policy	April 2017
Harassment Discrimination and Bullying Policy	April 2017
Workplace Policy	May 2017
ICT Policy (New)	June 2017



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

- *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*
- *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
- *Financial Arrangements Act 1982*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*
- *Public Records Act 2002*
- *Public Service Act 2008*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.*

Publication of information on-line

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

Publications by the Commission during 2016-17

1. Annual Report 2015-2016
2. Quarterly Report 32 (April to June 2016)
3. Quarterly Report 33 (July to September 2016)
4. Quarterly Report 34 (October to December 2016)
5. Quarterly Report 35 (January to March 2017)

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