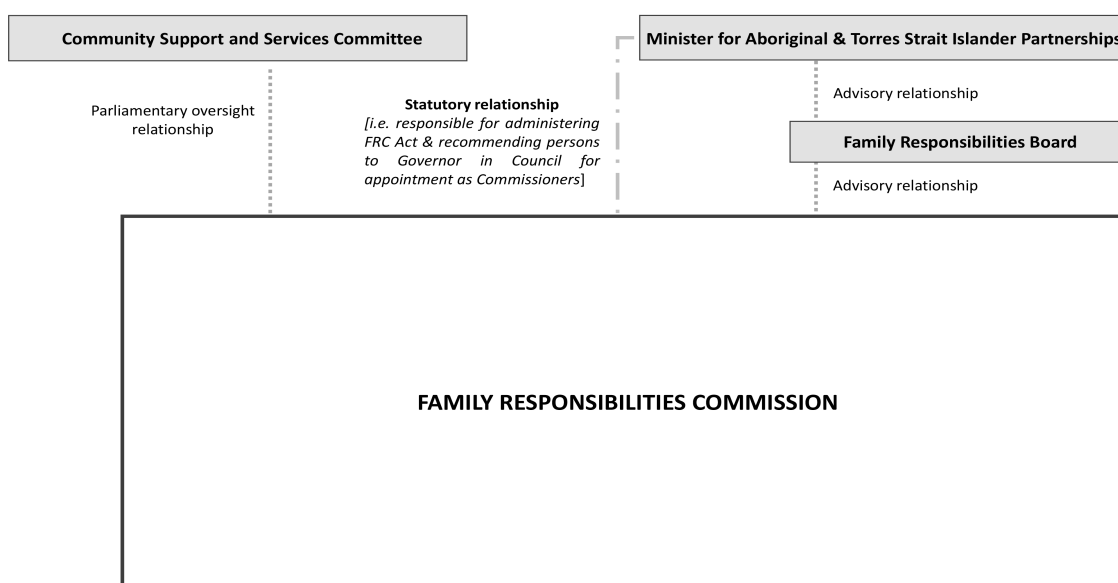




Governance

External governance

The FRC, as an independent statutory authority, falls under the umbrella of DSDSATSIP, whose Director-General was the Chair of the Family Responsibilities Board during this reporting period. The FRC Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Local Commissioners are appointed by the Governor in Council under recommendation by the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. The Minister and FR Board have advisory relationships to the FRC Commissioner.



Ministerial portfolio

For the period 1 July 2020 to 11 November 2020 the Minister responsible for administering the FRC Act was the Honourable Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. From 12 November 2020 Minister Crawford's dual portfolio changed from Fire and Emergency Services to Seniors and Disability Services and retained the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander portfolio.

Family Responsibilities Board

Part 12 of the FRC Act provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (FR Board). Under section 117 of the FRC Act, the FR Board has a mandate to: give advice and make recommendations to the State Minister about the operation of the Commission; if asked by the Commissioner, give advice and make recommendations to the Commission about the performance of its functions; and consider the reports submitted by the Commission.

The FR Board consists of one person nominated by the State Minister (chairperson of the FR Board), one person nominated by the Australian Government and one person nominated by the Cape York Institute. FR Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council for the term stated in the member's instrument of appointment.

Governance



The FR Board members as at 30 June 2021 were:

Dr Chris Sarra	Director-General, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP) as the Chair
Mr Ray Griggs	AO, CSC, CEO, National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
Mr Noel Pearson	Founder, Cape York Partnership representing the Cape York Institute (CYI).

The FRC Act requires the FR Board to meet every six months. The meeting may be held by using any technology available which will allow for efficient and effective communication. The FR Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the FR Board is comprised of two members. Meetings during the reporting period are reflected below.

Date of FR Board meeting	Venue	Attendees
3 November 2020	Teleconference	Dr Chris Sarra (Chair), Director-General DSDSATSIP; Mr Ray Griggs AO, CSC, CEO, NIAA; Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYI.
4 May 2021	1 William Street, Brisbane	Dr Chris Sarra (Chair), Director-General DSDSATSIP; Mr Ray Griggs AO, CSC, CEO, NIAA; Mr Noel Pearson, Founder, CYI.

Executive management

The Commission's EMT is comprised of the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Registrar, and the Executive Officer (Finance). 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 regarding its obligations under the FRC Act and other relevant legislation.



Governance

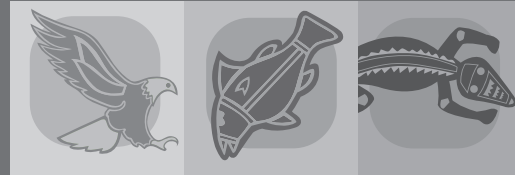
Due to the small size of the Commission, the role of the EMT also encompasses the corporate stewardship functions associated with the Commission's operational performance. In addition, the EMT oversees the operations of finance, information management, human resources and planning, audit, risk management, systems review and workload and performance management. The EMT met on a regular basis throughout the 2020-21 year.

Queensland public service 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		

The Commission has structured its operations in accordance with the objects and principles of the FRC Act and the Queensland Public Service Values: 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 pledges to work with the Australian and Queensland Governments, stakeholders and clients to deliver outcomes for the welfare reform communities. In doing so the Commission nurtures a spirit of inquiry and innovation. Our Local Commissioners and registry staff know their customers and value the cultural needs and family connectedness of community members. Decisions are made with an understanding of where each client comes from and what has influenced their behaviour. The exercise of authority under the FRC Act is governed by this empathy. The Commissioners 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 registry staff and from Commission clients.

Governance



Public sector ethics and Code of Conduct

Apart from the Family Responsibilities Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and the Local Commissioners – who are appointed by Governor in Council – staff of the Commission are employed under the *Public Service Act 2008*. 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. Online fraud and corruption and Code of Conduct training is included in induction processes for new employees and is completed by all employees on an annual basis. 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 the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, the FRC Act and relevant Public Service Commission (PSC) policies and directives. The Code of Conduct and Workplace Policy are both available in hard copy at all Commission premises.

The Local Registry Coordinators for the communities of Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge conduct Code of Conduct training for the Local Commissioners on an annual basis and facilitated Code of Conduct training for the Local Commissioners in July 2020. Aside from the fundamental principles of the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct which are strictly adhered to, the principles of natural justice, conflict of interest and confidentiality are established and strongly reinforced with Local Commissioners through the Local Commissioners' Handbook and the Local Commissioners' Conference Guidelines. Confidentiality is specifically legislated by section 147 'Preservation of confidentiality' in the FRC Act which stipulates that a Commission member, FR Board member, member of staff or a person engaged by a support service must not record, disclose or use confidential information gained through involvement in the administration of the FRC Act unless for lawful purposes as defined in the section.

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 registry and in the five welfare reform communities. The Commission's Strategic Plan is currently under review, and now to be informed and finalised following a review of the FRC commissioned by DSDSATSIP in the first half of the 2021-22 financial year.

Human Rights

The *Human Rights Act 2019* came into effect on 1 January 2020. The Act is a framework for the Queensland public sector and places the human rights of individuals at the forefront of government and public sector service delivery. It is therefore clear that as employees in a public entity, and as employers, we must consider the impact of our decisions and actions on the human rights of those we serve.

The Commission is committed to building a culture that respects and promotes human rights. To build upon this commitment, all employees complete annual online training through iLearn, the Learning Management System for the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA), the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (CHDE) and DSDSATSIP. In-house training to be delivered by the Queensland Human Rights



Governance

Commission was scheduled for early in the financial year, however, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic has delayed this training until a future date. Training regarding the legislative requirements of the *Human Rights Act 2019* is included as mandatory induction training.

The Commission has reviewed its complaints management policies to incorporate the need to identify and deal appropriately with a human rights complaint in a transparent process. The Commission has adopted the 'receive/assess/consider/resolve/respond/learn/report' methodology to handle human rights complaints. The policy states the Commission will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and will properly consider human rights when making decisions regarding complaints. The Commission received no human rights complaints during the reporting period.

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 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. 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 BCP commences with an integrated approach to managing all risks that may impact strategic and business objectives and moves to reviewing and re-evaluating identified risks and reporting to the EMT.

Internal audit

The Commission is a small organisation, and as such a separate audit committee has not been established. Additionally, a specific internal audit function is not required unless directed by the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Responsibility for audit functions is included as part of the role of the EMT in the corporate governance and service delivery of the Commission.

The Executive Officer (Finance) is responsible for performing internal audits to ensure efficiency and economy of systems and to identify financial, operational and business continuity risks. Audit results are reported to the Commissioner and Registrar to determine whether remedial actions are required and to establish compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.

Throughout the reporting period, the EMT requested periodic audits of the Commission's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for quality assurance purposes. These audits were undertaken to assist in maintaining the integrity of our underlying data used for

Governance



operational and statistical reporting purposes, as well as to ensure continuous improvement in delivering flexible, effective and efficient services.

The results of internal audits undertaken during the reporting period did not identify any significant deficiencies in internal control processes nor any operational or financial risks of a systemic nature that required external remedial action.

External scrutiny

The Commission began this reporting period under the oversight of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee pursuant to the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*. Parliamentary oversight Committee responsibilities include:

- monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Commission
- reporting to the Legislative Assembly on any matter concerning the Commission, including its functions and performance
- examining annual reports and, if appropriate, commenting on any aspect of the report and
- reporting to the Assembly on any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the Commission that the Committee considers desirable for more effective operations.

In September of this reporting period the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee released its Report No 76 'Oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission'. In Report No 76 the Committee examined the Commission's 2018-19 Annual Report and referred to the oversight briefing by Commissioner Williams and Commission staff to the Economics and Governance Committee on 25 November 2019. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee commented, "*The committee recognises the extremely challenging nature of many of the issues being examined by the FRC and the volume of work undertaken by the FRC. The committee also commends the FRC for the professional and considered approach that it takes in the discharge of its functions*".

Following Queensland State Government elections conducted on 31 October 2020 Ministerial portfolio changes were made with Minister Craig Crawford MP retaining the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships portfolio and gaining the responsibility for Seniors and Disability Services. Pursuant to this change the Commission's Parliamentary oversight Committee changed to the Community Support and Services Committee.

On 8 March 2021, by invitation, Commissioner Williams, Registrar Maxine McLeod and Executive Officer (Finance) Tracey Paterson appeared at a public briefing before the Queensland Parliament's Community Support and Services Committee in Brisbane. The purpose of the briefing was to assist the Committee with its oversight of the functions and performance of the Commission. At the briefing Commissioner Williams provided an update on the shared outcomes achieved with the support of our tripartite partnership and joint Australian and Queensland Government investment, highlighted from an internal longitudinal performance assessment of FRC operations since 2008. Further advice was provided to the Committee regarding the imminent transition from the BasicsCard to the CDC in FRC communities, the funding uncertainty affecting the Commission and statutory appointments, and the challenges faced by the Commission and Australian and Queensland Governments in providing support services to regionally isolated communities (particularly in regard to domestic and family violence counselling).



Governance

Information systems and records governance

The Commission has a service level agreement with the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) for the provision of 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 in accordance with the Queensland Government Information Security Policy (IS18:2018).

The Commission's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) system plays a vital role in supporting employees in the Cairns registry and regional offices. The Commission, in conjunction with CAA, has policies and 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, ensure reliable availability, preserve the integrity of information, and provide a high level of security and confidentiality. From 2021-22 all staff will be required to complete online annual information security training in order to protect the integrity of our systems.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way people work around the world and accelerated digital adoption and transformation. The Commission has adapted to incorporate more flexible and resilient systems and processes to support staff working and collaborating remotely. Information security is paramount and was carefully considered through this implementation.

Various projects were undertaken by our ICT Administrator, Jeffrey Dela Cruz, during the reporting period comprising changes to our ICT systems as detailed below:

- Substantial work and modifications to the Commission's CRM system were completed during this financial year. Processes and operations were reviewed and refined to produce quality and meaningful outcome data for the Commission and external stakeholders. A more client outcomes-focused approach was adopted to drive these changes to the database. Building this type of reporting framework will enhance the Commission's ability to identify factors that are essential to effecting change to clients' lives.
- The Commission worked closely with DSS through the roll out of the CDC to support DSS and clients that were on income management. An FRC dashboard was developed and shared with DSS to identify the strengths of the FRC model as part of the CDC and identify information to inform on the drivers of voluntary income management. Additionally, the data has informed on the age and gender demographic of those applying to participate in the CDC and proactive and reactive motivators.
- The ICT Administrator commenced working with CAA, CITEC and Telstra to upgrade the Commission's network. This upgrade is essential to align with the developments implemented to the ICT system and to support future improvements to the Commission's information security.

The Commission will continually aim to implement innovative and technology 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 finance section of the registry successfully transitioned to a paperless environment in January 2019, markedly increasing efficiencies in time management, and streamlining accounts payable and payroll processes.

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.

Governance



The Commission complies with recordkeeping practices in accordance with section 141 of the FRC Act, the *Public Records Act 2002* and sections 7, 22 and 23 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*. Approximately 90 percent of Commission records are held in digital format.

As the Commission has been dependent upon funding commitments from the Queensland and Australian Governments on an annual basis, only those records which are identified as falling within section 141 of the FRC Act are destroyed. All other public records have been retained. No records have yet been transferred to the Queensland State Archives.

Workforce profile

At 30 June 2021 the Commission had an employee establishment of 17 positions occupied by 16 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members. Additionally, the Commission employs 28 Indigenous Local Commissioners who are employed on a fee for service basis. The Local Commissioners are paid under the remuneration procedures for part-time chairs and members of Queensland Government Bodies. The Commission also employs a Deputy Commissioner who is engaged subject to a delegation from the FRC Commissioner to perform her functions under section 24 of the FRC Act as needed. The Deputy Commissioner's functions include, but are not limited to, conferencing, mentoring and training of the Local Commissioners, strategic policy development and other governance related matters. The Deputy Commissioner is paid at an hourly rate commensurate with that of a Magistrate under the *Judicial Remuneration Act 2007* and may act as the Commissioner (if appointed under section 25 of the FRC Act) if the Commissioner is not available to perform the Commissioner's functions or there is a vacancy in the office of the Commissioner. The figures in the workforce profile table are based on the public servant workforce profile of the Commission, including the FRC Commissioner as CEO, but excluding the Local Commissioners and Deputy Commissioner.

Workforce profile
Of the 16 FTEs, 10 are permanent staff, 5 are temporary staff and 1 is on a set contract term (FRC Commissioner's tenure is set by the Governor in Council)
18.75 percent of our workforce is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
75 percent of our workforce are women

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 conducts all recruitment and selection processes in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act 2008* and relevant PSC policies and directives. New employees are welcomed through the Commission's online induction process which provides information regarding 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.

During the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 no redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid.



Governance

Performance management

To facilitate employee development, each employee together with their manager signs a Performance and Development Agreement which is linked to the Commission's strategic objectives. 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.

Flexible working arrangements and wellbeing

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 to assist in balancing work and carer roles where required. Employees are 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.

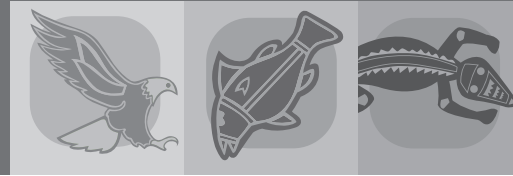
Employees across the public service contributed to the COVID-19 pandemic response in a range of different ways. Commission employees contributed to this effort by continuing to deliver essential services. Financial support is provided to staff in relation to obtaining the flu vaccine and employees are provided special leave to obtain COVID-19 vaccinations. The Commission continues to implement measures to support physical distancing and enhanced hygiene including additional cleaning and limiting employee numbers in smaller areas of the registry office such as the lunch and boardrooms. All staff who are required to travel for work are issued with a 'travel safe pack' equipped with masks, gloves, tissues and hand sanitiser. As of 30 June 2021, all staff members had returned to the workplace following last year's teleworking environment caused by the pandemic.

Professional development

The Commission is committed to providing professional development to the Local Commissioners on an ongoing basis to ensure it actively works to restore local authority by:

- assisting the Local Commissioners to enhance and expand upon relationships with other Indigenous organisations, service providers, government departments and agencies
- assisting the Local Commissioners with the delivery of training modules on statutory interpretation and applying a decision-making framework consistent with the FRC Act
- conducting a training week during which the Local Commissioners received professional training in emotional intelligence, the impact of domestic and family violence and fraud and corruption training delivered by the Crime and Corruption Commission

Governance



- conducting round table discussions to set strategic priorities, analyse unique challenges and develop a vision for the future
- conducting a review of operations via individual community dashboards through which statistics are presented and analysed, key performance indicators are set and assessed, and goals refreshed.

The broader focus of the Commission's professional development program for employees is on:

- promoting 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
- ongoing in-house training delivered by the Commissioner on statutory interpretation and application of the FRC Act to registry practices and procedures
- building a resilient workforce by providing online courses in Ethical Decision-Making, leadership and people management skills, Recognise, Respond, Refer – Domestic and Family Violence, Fraud and Corruption Control, Information Privacy, Conflict of Interest, Human Rights Act Public Entities Decision Making (online), Phishing – Information Security Awareness and Finance and Procurement Fundamentals
- promoting cultural capacity by providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training upon induction
- facilitating visits to welfare reform communities for new employees to increase their awareness of each unique community and enhance their understanding of the conferencing environment
- providing flexible work practices to enable employees to study whilst continuing to meet operational and client needs
- providing financial assistance and leave arrangements under the Commission's Study and Research Assistance Scheme.

In line with the above strategies and practices, employees are offered backfill roles in higher duty positions where available in order to ensure continuity of work processes, mitigate downtime, minimise disruption to workflows and enhance employee retention. Backfilling and cross-training safeguards employee expertise and corporate knowledge whilst maximising succession planning. During this reporting period three requests for conversion to tenure under Directive 09/20, 'Fixed term temporary employment' and two requests under Directive 13/20, 'Appointing a public service employee to a higher classification level' have been received and approved for conversion from 1 July 2021.

During 2020-21 employee professional development, training, and workshops cost \$12,426 excluding travel costs. This investment provides a platform for the Commission to foster the development of new skills, monitor, evaluate and improve business processes and improve service delivery. Unfortunately, inhouse leadership training plans continued to be affected by COVID safety limitations during this reporting period.



Governance

Publication of information online

For information regarding right to information and information privacy refer to the Right to Information section on the Commission website. For Indigenous matters and complaints management, refer to the Additional Published Information under Right to Information on the Commission's website at <https://www.frcq.org.au>. For consultancies and overseas travel, refer to the Queensland Government Open Data website at <https://data.qld.gov.au>.

Publications by the Commission during 2020-21

1. Annual Report 2019-2020
2. Quarterly Reports 48 - 51 (April 2020 to March 2021)

All publications are available on the FRC's website: <https://www.frcq.org.au>.