

# **Family Responsibilities Commission**

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

## **Quarterly Report**

**No. 43**

**January 2019 to March 2019**



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

## Executive Summary

Quantified in the table below are the activities undertaken by the Commission during quarter 43 with comparisons shown to the previous quarter.

**Table 1:** Activity from 1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019.

Activity	Qtr 42	Qtr 43	Movement
Within jurisdiction agency notices received	1425	1313	↓
Conferences held	631	616	↓
Family Responsibility Agreements entered into	4	3	↓
Orders made to attend community support services	13	6	↓
Conditional Income Management Orders made	44	41	↓
Voluntary Income Management Agreements entered into	3	4	↑
Clients case-managed	74	66	↓
Referrals made	16	8	↓
Applications to Amend or End received	13	14	↑
Show Cause conferences held	0	0	→

As can be seen from the figures above, activity was down in Quarter 43 reflecting four weeks of school holidays during which there is traditionally no conferencing, sorry business occurring during the quarter in all communities and severe weather events which were experienced across Cape York.

In February the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, Legislation Committee, invited Commissioner David Glasgow to provide a written submission addressing issues that may be of relevance to the Commission regarding the inquiry into the *Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Income Management and Cashless Welfare) Bill 2019*. A written submission was presented on 26 February to the Committee. Issues of relevance brought to the Committee's attention included:

- Commissioners have generally taken a moderate approach to issuing Conditional Income Management (CIM) orders, often concentrating on those clients who would be more receptive to the benefits of financial management. The Commissioners explain to those clients the advantages of Income Management as a means of managing their money to meet essential household needs and expenses, thereby assisting in stabilising their home situation and better providing for their children. Many clients therefore commence their orders in the spirit of an agreement.
- Commissioners order CIM for clients who have demonstrated a resistance to fulfilling their responsibilities for the children in their care, or their responsibilities to their community. In this respect CIM is used as an enabler for compliance with orders.
- CIM is used as an incentive to improve school attendance by reducing the CIM rate relative to improved school attendance.
- Commissioners continue to report that a number of clients are requesting CIM orders and to be placed on a BasicsCard. These clients request that the Commission order the CIM as a means of stabilising the household and ensuring bills are paid and children are fed, in preference to being placed on Voluntary Income Management (VIM) where pressure from spouses and family members can erode the intent of Income Management.

The majority of CIM orders relate to education notices (not sending children to school). For example, as at 25 February 2019, 90 children were in the care of 54 Aurukun clients currently on a CIM order, with 34 of these clients on a 90 percent CIM order.

Whilst the benefit of Income Management is in the capacity of the BasicsCard to assist people to manage their income, and the negative is the perceived loss of choice, it is only one of the tools available to the

Commissioners in restoring social responsibility in their communities. Income Management is used in a targeted approach, mostly as a last resort, and thus only a small percentage of clients are subject to a Conditional Income Management order.

On 13 March the Committee further invited Commissioner Glasgow to appear at a public hearing for the inquiry to be held on 18 March 2019. On the instructions of, and in consultation with Commissioner Glasgow, Registrar Maxine McLeod appeared via telephone link at the hearing and presented a statement on behalf of Commissioner Glasgow. In early April the *Social Security (Administration) Amendment (Income Management and Cashless Welfare) Bill 2019* passed both Houses, extending Cape York Income Management to 30 June 2020.

During the quarter Director-General of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP), Dr Chris Sarra, met with the Doomadgee Local Commissioners to consult with them regarding the Queensland Government's proposed Local Thriving Communities reform agenda which delivers the Government's response to the Queensland Productivity Commission report on its inquiry into service delivery in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Commission is informed the Government will be implementing Local Thriving Communities across all 19 remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in co-design with communities.

The finance section of the Registry successfully transitioned to a paperless environment in January, markedly increasing efficiencies in time management, and streamlining accounts payable and payroll processes.

Several training modules were completed by Commission staff this quarter relating to information privacy and domestic violence. This online training was provided to complement the release of the Commission's revised Privacy Policy, Domestic Violence Policy and Workplace Policy. Further policy work completed in March included a review of the Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure, an update of the Commission's Publication Scheme and a review and update of the Commission's website.

The Commission is proud to announce that on Saturday, 26 January, Cooktown Shire Council awarded Coen Local Commissioner Maureen Liddy Citizen of the Year at the annual Australia Day celebrations conducted at the Cooktown Botanical Gardens. Her nomination described her as a "tireless worker, change facilitator and advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Coen and across Cape York". In 2018 she was also awarded the people's choice "Spirit of the Walk" award for her determination to walk the entire 42 kilometres of the event.

A memorandum of understanding to set out an agreed basis for future funding, administration and reporting arrangements for the operation of the FRC is currently under negotiation between the Australian and Queensland Governments. As at 31 March 2019 the Commission has no official commitment for funding from the Australian Government for the current six months (January to June 2019), nor has it a commitment for funding from the Queensland Government from 1 July 2019.

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### **Abbreviations**

CIM	Conditional Income Management
DATSIP	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DoE	Department of Education
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney-General
DV	Domestic Violence
DVB	Domestic Violence Breach
DVO	Domestic Violence Order
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
QPS	Queensland Police Service
VIM	Voluntary Income Management

### **Also:**

Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)  
*Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (the Act)

# Family Responsibilities Commission Welfare Reforms

Report to 31 March 2019.

## 1. Activities and Trends

### Notices

In quarter 43 the Commission received **1,831 agency notices**<sup>1</sup>. Some individuals may have been the subject of more than one agency notice. Of that figure 1,313 notices (72 percent) were within the Commission's jurisdiction and 518 notices (28 percent) were outside the Commission's jurisdiction.

**Table 2:** In jurisdiction notices by type and community 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

Type of Notice	AU	CO	DM	HV	MG	Total
District Court notices	7	0	0	0	0	<b>7</b>
Magistrates Court notices	254	15	0	95	15	<b>379</b>
Domestic Violence Breach notices	8	6	0	20	0	<b>34</b>
Domestic Violence Order notices	16	3	0	20	7	<b>46</b>
School Attendance notices	317	6	369	101	20	<b>813</b>
School Enrolment notice	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Child Safety and Welfare notices	20	4	0	7	3	<b>34</b>
Housing Tenancy notices	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1313</b>

### Further details of notices within jurisdiction for each community are set out below:

- Aurukun's **622** notices constitute **47.4** percent of the total notices in jurisdiction across the welfare reform communities.
- Coen's **34** notices constitute **2.6** percent of the total notices in jurisdiction.
- Doomadgee's **369** notices constitute **28.1** percent of the total notices in jurisdiction.
- Hope Vale's **243** notices constitute **18.5** percent of the total notices in jurisdiction.
- Mossman Gorge's **45** notices constitute **3.4** percent of the total notices in jurisdiction.

**Table 3:** Not within jurisdiction notices by type and community 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

Type of Notice	AU	CO	DM	HV	MG	Total
Supreme Court notices	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
District Court notices	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Magistrates Court notices	148	7	0	115	73	<b>343</b>
Domestic Violence Breach notices	5	0	0	9	3	<b>17</b>
Domestic Violence Order notices	2	0	0	32	16	<b>50</b>
School Attendance notices	18	6	71	7	0	<b>102</b>
School Enrolment notice	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Child Safety and Welfare notices	2	0	0	3	1	<b>6</b>
Housing Tenancy notices	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>518</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**Table 4:** Court locations for in jurisdiction DVB and DVO notices 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

<b>Court Location</b>	<b>Number of DVB notices</b>	<b>Number of DVO notices</b>	<b>Total</b>
Aurukun	8	14	<b>22</b>
Cairns	0	4	<b>4</b>
Coen	6	2	<b>8</b>
Cooktown	19	20	<b>39</b>
Mareeba	0	1	<b>1</b>
Mossman	0	2	<b>2</b>
Sandgate	0	1	<b>1</b>
Townsville	0	2	<b>2</b>
Weipa	1	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>80</b>

Since its commencement the Commission has received 43,101 agency notices within its jurisdiction. Total within and not within jurisdiction notices decreased from 2,054 in quarter 42 to 1,831 in quarter 43. Of those notices within jurisdiction, District Court and Domestic Violence Breach notices increased whilst Magistrate Court, Domestic Violence, School Attendance, School Enrolment, Child Safety and Welfare and Housing Tenancy notices decreased from quarter 42 to quarter 43. A breakdown of within jurisdiction notices is provided below.

District Court notices increased this quarter to 7 from 1 received in the previous quarter. Aurukun increased by 6 notices. Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge remained unchanged with zero notices received for the quarter. The Commission does not receive District Court notices for Doomadgee.

Magistrates Court notices decreased this quarter to 379 from 404 received in the previous quarter. Aurukun, Coen and Mossman Gorge decreased by 50 notices, 5 notices and 13 notices respectively, whilst Hope Vale increased by 43 notices. The Commission does not receive Magistrates Court notices for Doomadgee.

Domestic Violence Breach notices increased from 21 in quarter 42 to 34 in quarter 43. Aurukun and Mossman Gorge decreased by 3 notices and 4 notices respectively, whilst Coen and Hope Vale increased by 3 notices and 17 notices. The Commission does not receive Domestic Violence Breach notices for Doomadgee.

The Commission sought clarification from the Queensland Police Service (QPS) in Hope Vale regarding the increased number of offence notices received for the quarter. The Commission was advised by QPS they had additional police present in community which doubled their contingent to four officers, resulting in extra rostered shifts during the quarter. QPS also advised that the disaster assistance flood money received by eligible residents of Hope Vale had a major impact on the community. Police were kept very busy in the week after the payments were received by community members with a notable increase in alcohol related incidents.

Domestic Violence Order notices decreased from 52 in quarter 42 to 46 in quarter 43. Aurukun decreased by 10 notices and Coen decreased by 2 notices, whilst Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge both increased by 3 notices for the quarter. The Commission does not receive Domestic Violence Order notices for Doomadgee.

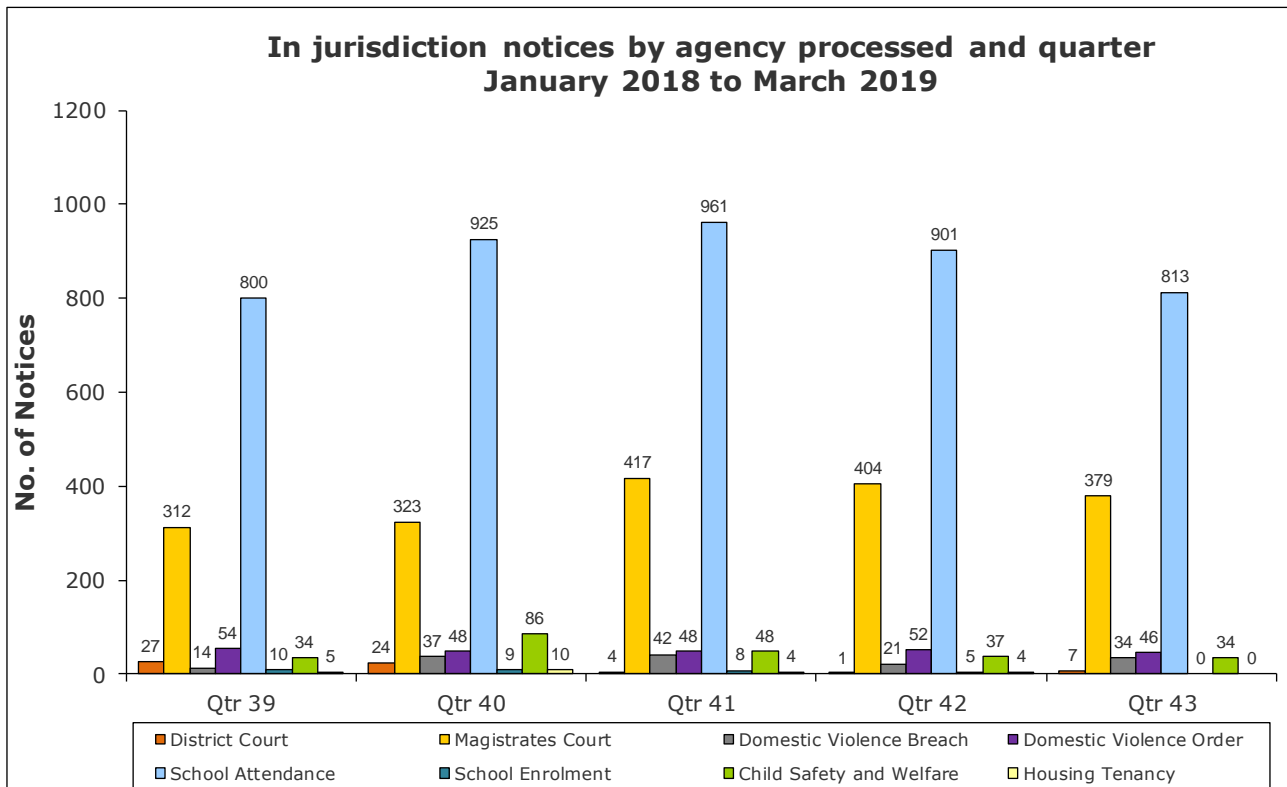
School Attendance notices decreased from 901 in quarter 42 to 813 in quarter 43. Four out of the five communities experienced a decrease in notices this quarter. Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and

Mossman Gorge decreased by 31, 22, 74 and 5 notices respectively, whilst Aurukun increased by 44 notices.

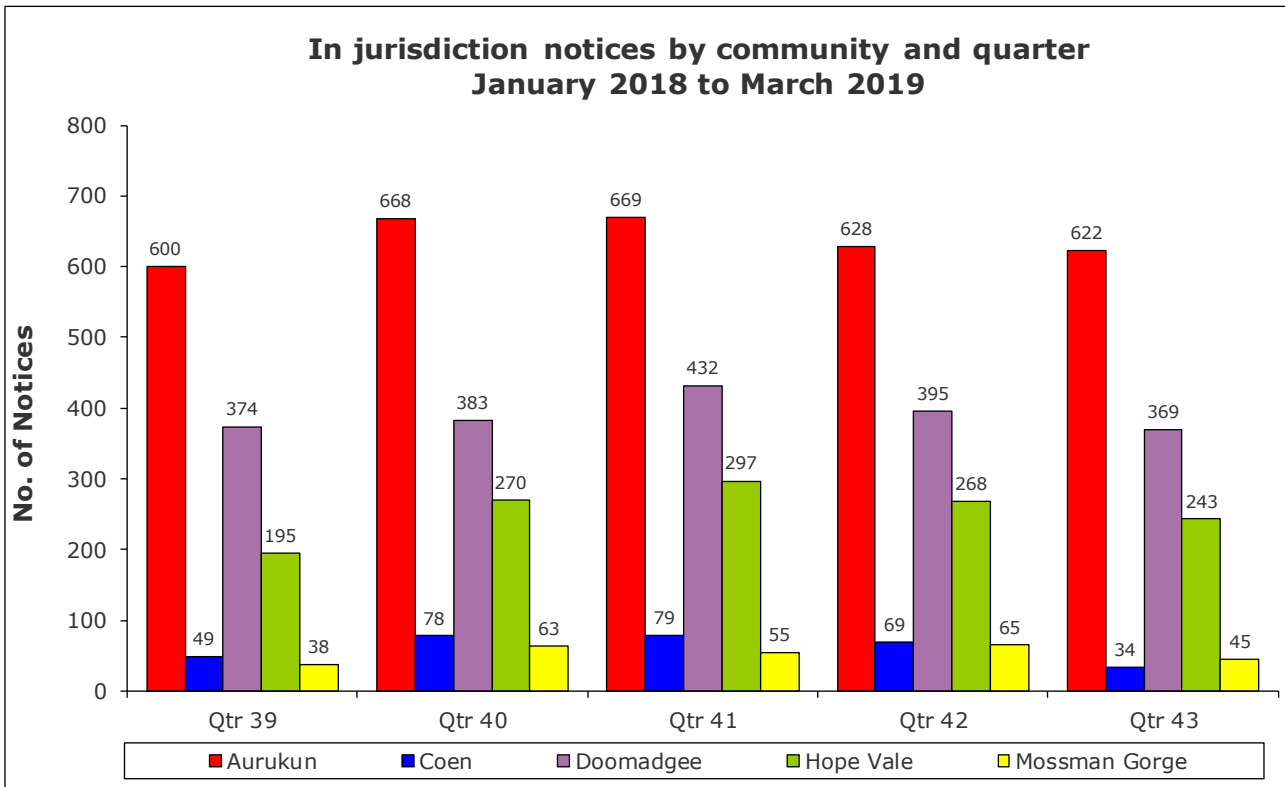
School Enrolment notices decreased from 5 in quarter 42 to 0 in quarter 43. Aurukun and Doomadgee both decreased by 2 notices whilst Coen decreased by 1 notice. Mossman Gorge and Hope Vale remained unchanged with 0 notices received for the quarter.

Child Safety and Welfare notices decreased from 37 in quarter 42 to 34 in quarter 43. Aurukun, Coen and Mossman Gorge increased by 9, 1 and 3 notices respectively, whilst Doomadgee and Hope Vale decreased by 2 notices and 14 notices respectively.

Housing Tenancy notices decreased from 4 in quarter 42 to 0 in quarter 43 with Mossman Gorge decreasing by 4 notices. No notices were received for Aurukun, Coen and Hope Vale for the quarter. The Commission does not receive Housing Tenancy notices for Doomadgee.

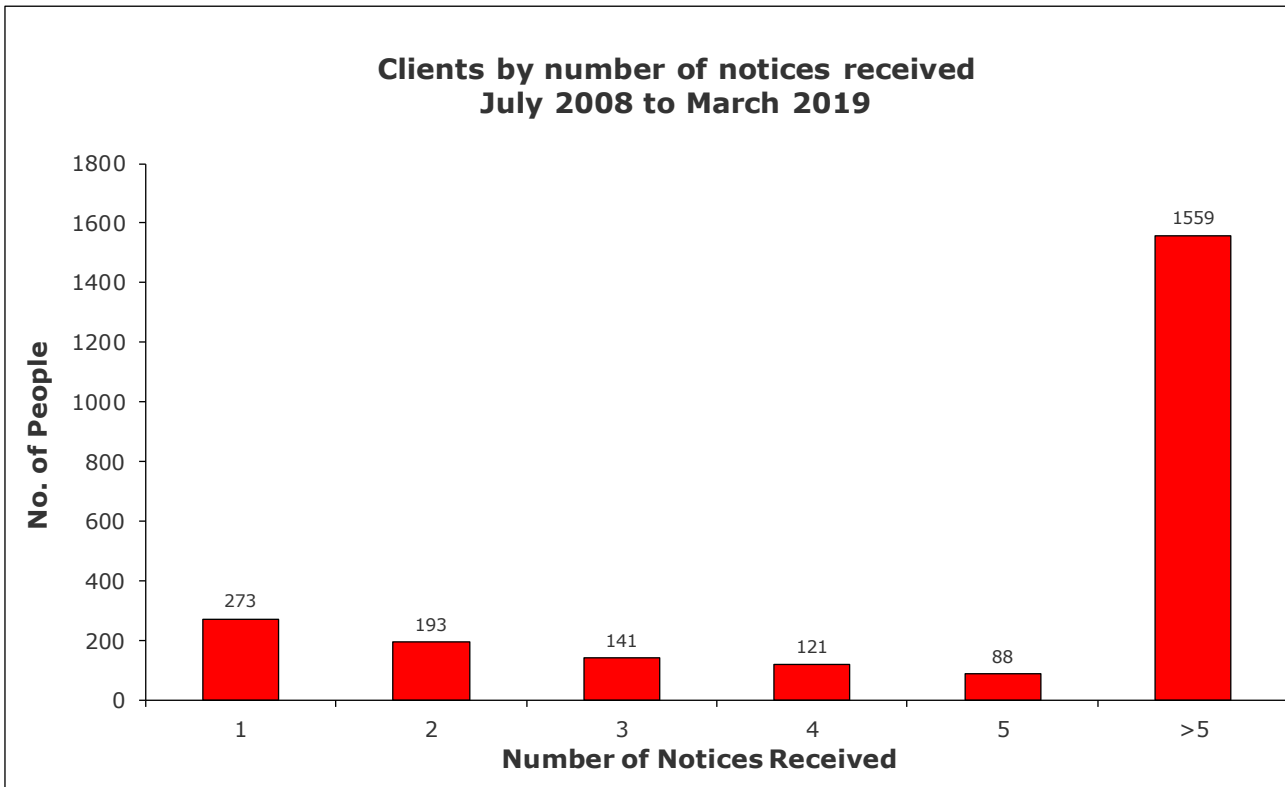


**Graph 1:** In jurisdiction notices by agency processed and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.



**Graph 2:** In jurisdiction notices by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

Since commencement in July 2008, 88.5 percent of clients have received more than one notice with 65.6 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. Conversely, 11.5 percent of clients have received only one notice.



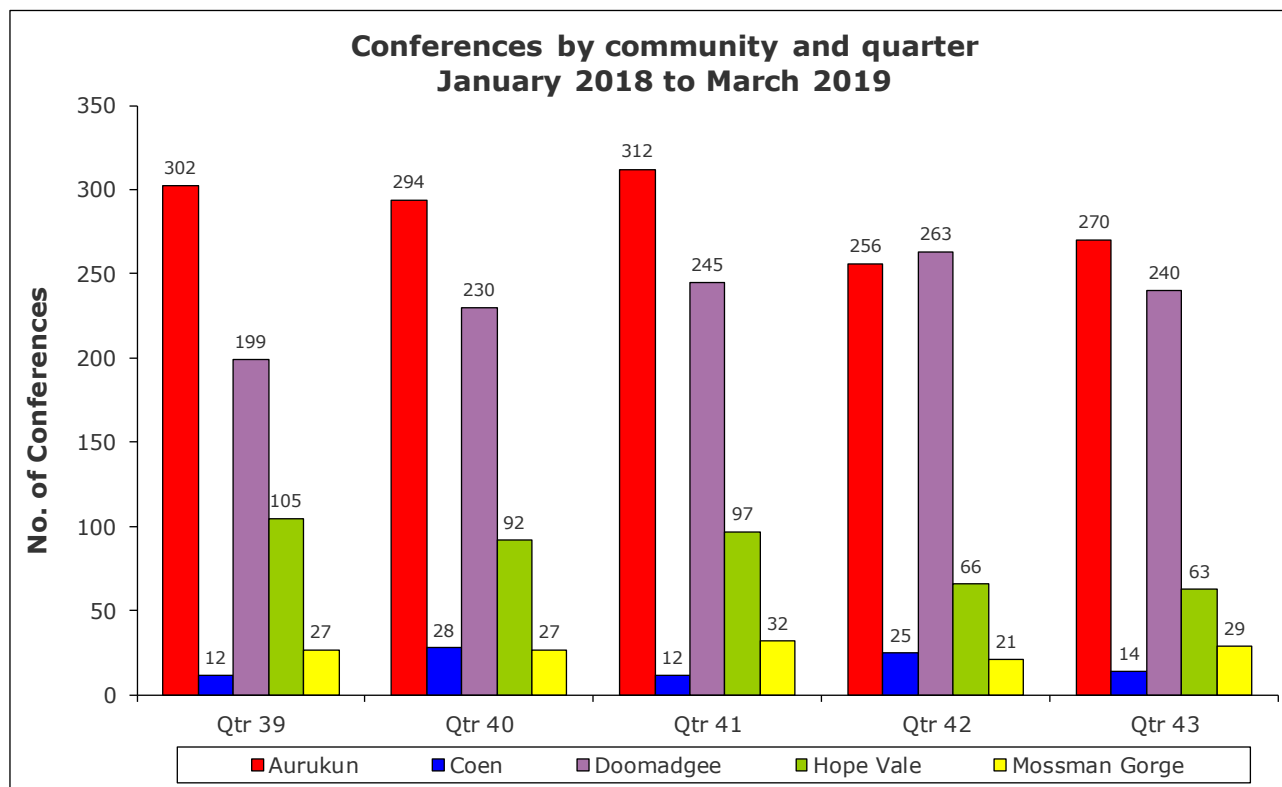
**Graph 3:** FRC clients by number of notices 1 July 2008 to 31 March 2019.

**(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

A total of 616 conferences<sup>2</sup> pertaining to all matters were held across the five communities in quarter 43, resulting in 3 FRAs being entered into, 6 orders made to attend community support services and 41 CIM orders issued. When compared to last quarter, this represents a decrease of 1 FRA, 7 orders to attend community support services and 3 CIM orders. Other outcomes as a result of conferencing during the quarter were decisions for no further action, rescheduling and scheduling to return for review with compliance. Twenty-one new clients were added to the Commission's database during the quarter. Conferences decreased from 631 in quarter 42 to 616 in quarter 43.



**Graph 4:** Conferences by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

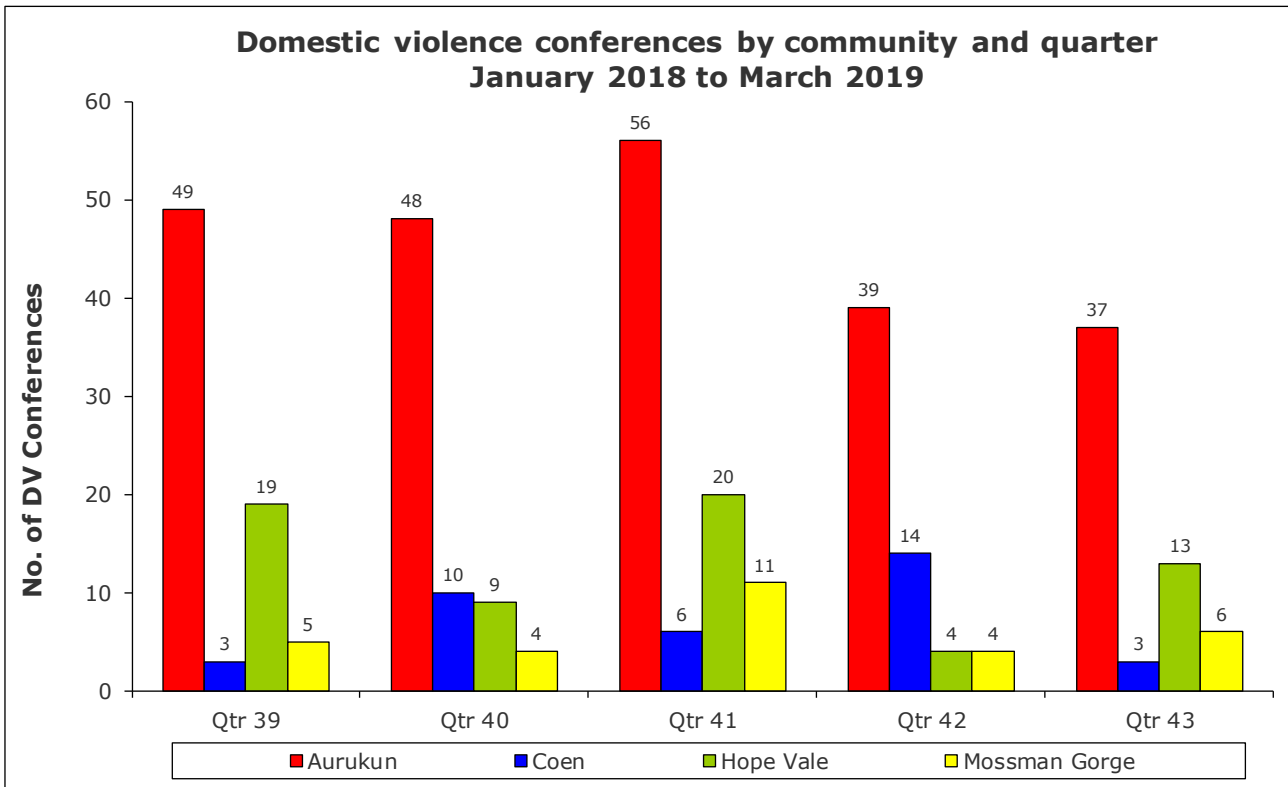
## Conferences for Domestic Violence related matters

As a subset of the total number of conferences conducted for the quarter, 59 domestic violence conferences were conducted in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge in quarter 43, representing a decrease of 2 from the previous quarter. Domestic violence conferences in the communities during the quarter were as follows: Aurukun decreased by 2, Coen decreased by 11, Hope Vale increased by 9 and Mossman Gorge increased by 2 domestic violence conferences.

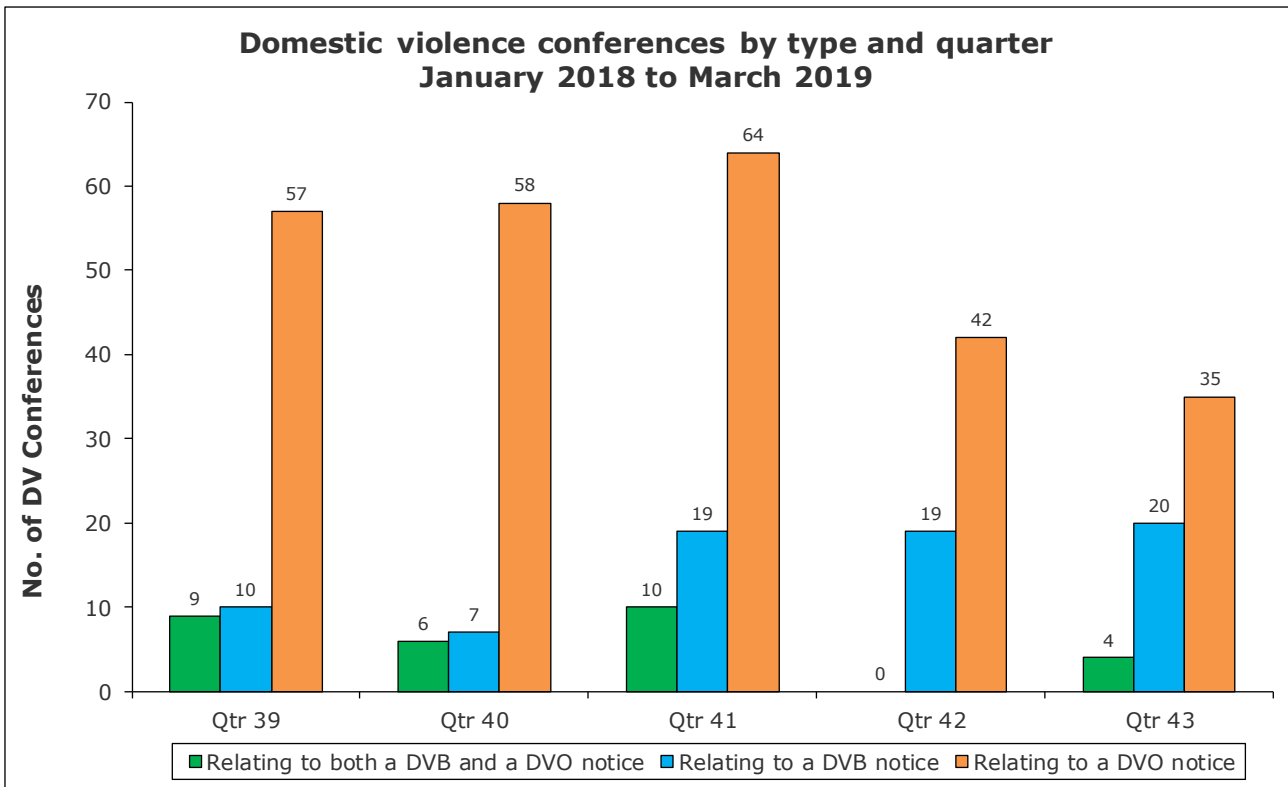
**Table 5:** Number of conferences held in relation to domestic violence notices (breaches and orders) per community 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

Number of Domestic Violence Conferences	AU	CO	HV	MG	Total
Relating to both a DVB and a DVO notice	1	0	3	0	<b>4</b>
Relating to a DVB notice	10	1	5	4	<b>20</b>
Relating to a DVO notice	26	2	5	2	<b>35</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>59</b>

<sup>2</sup> 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.



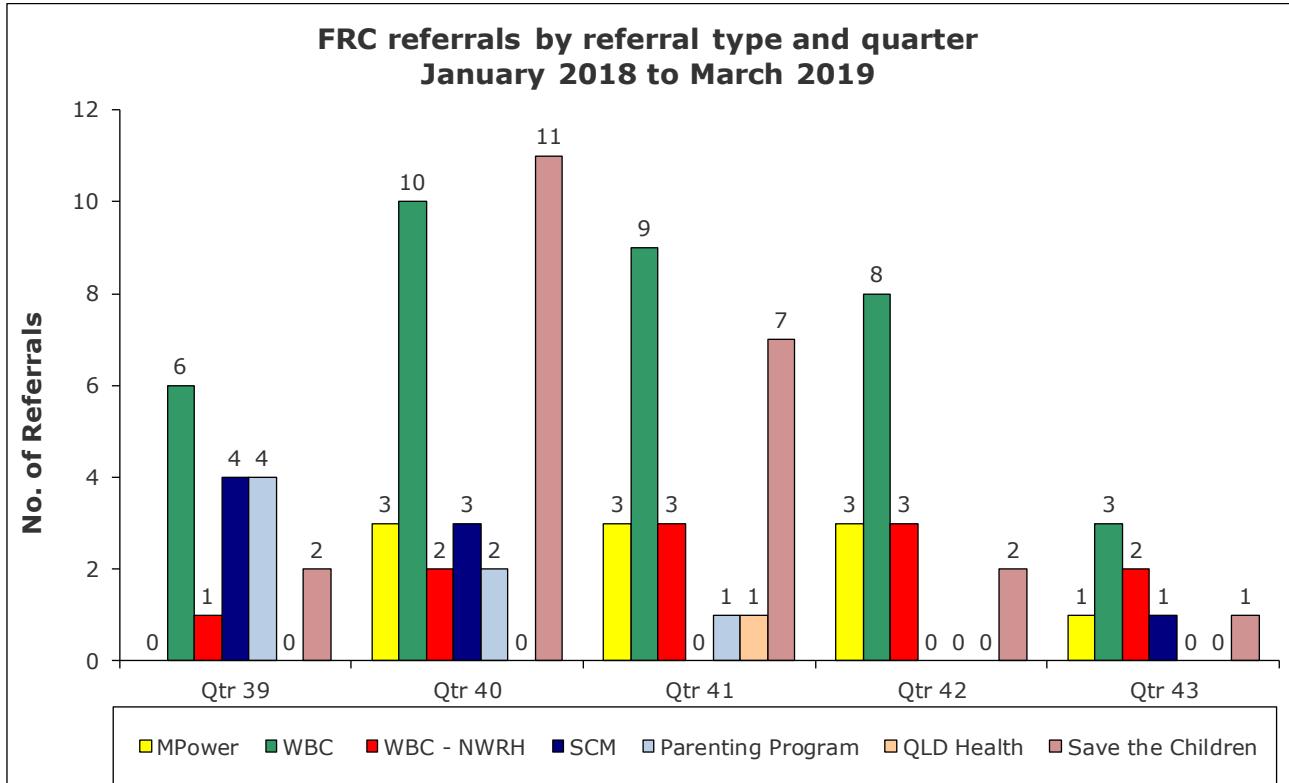
**Graph 5:** Domestic violence conferences by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.



**Graph 6:** Domestic violence conferences by type and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

## Referrals

The total number of referrals to service providers decreased from 16 in quarter 42 to 8 in quarter 43, relating to 7 clients. Since commencement the Commission has referred 1,036 clients to service providers resulting in approximately 43.3 percent of clients on 12 month service referral plans. Referrals in the communities during the quarter were as follows: Aurukun decreased by 2; Coen decreased by 5; Doomadgee decreased by 1; Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge remained the same with 0 referrals for the quarter.



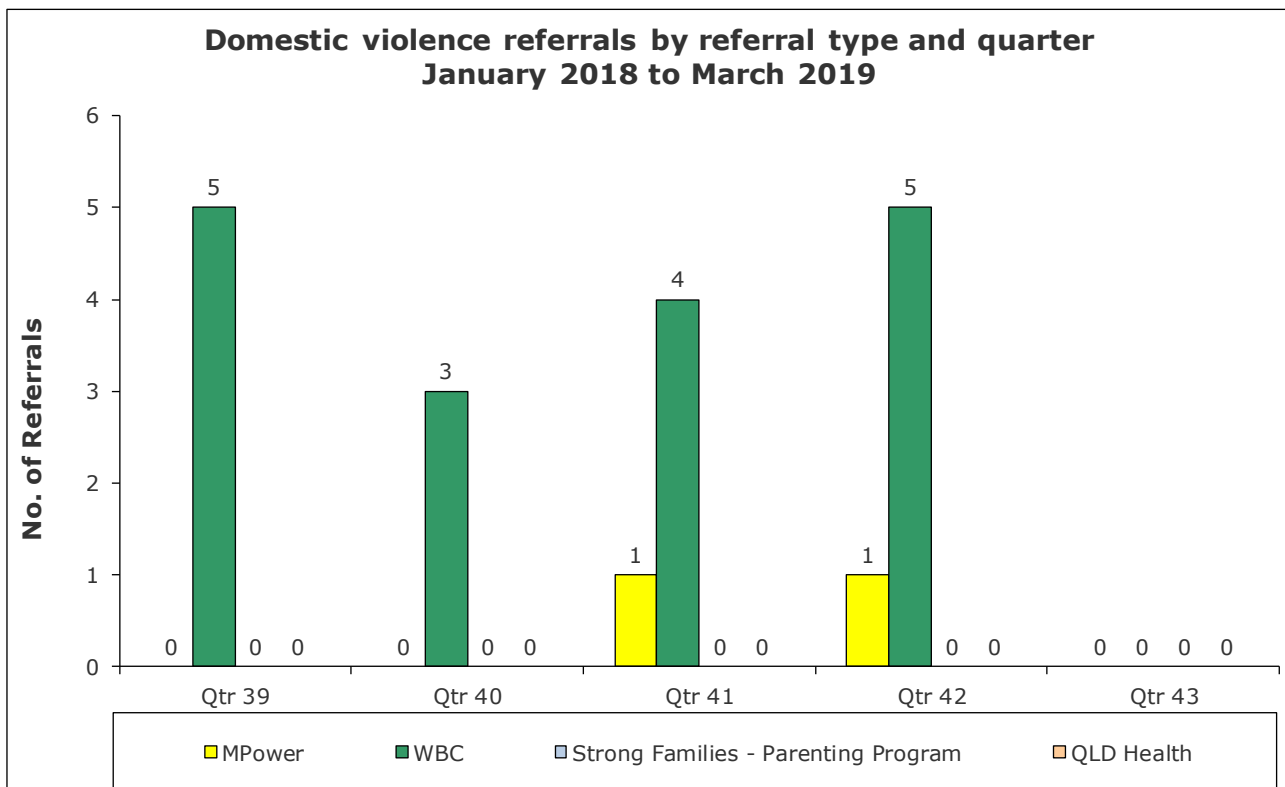
**Graph 7:** Referrals by referral type and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

## Referrals for Domestic Violence related matters

As a subset of the total number of referrals in the quarter, 0 referrals were made in relation to domestic violence conferences in quarter 43, representing a decrease of 6 from the previous quarter.

**Table 6:** Number of referrals in relation to domestic violence notices (breaches and orders) per community 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

Notice Type	Community	Referral	Provider Total
<b>DVB</b>			0
	<b>DVB Total</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>DVO</b>			0
	<b>DVO Total</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>0</b>



**Graph 8:** Domestic violence referrals by referral type and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

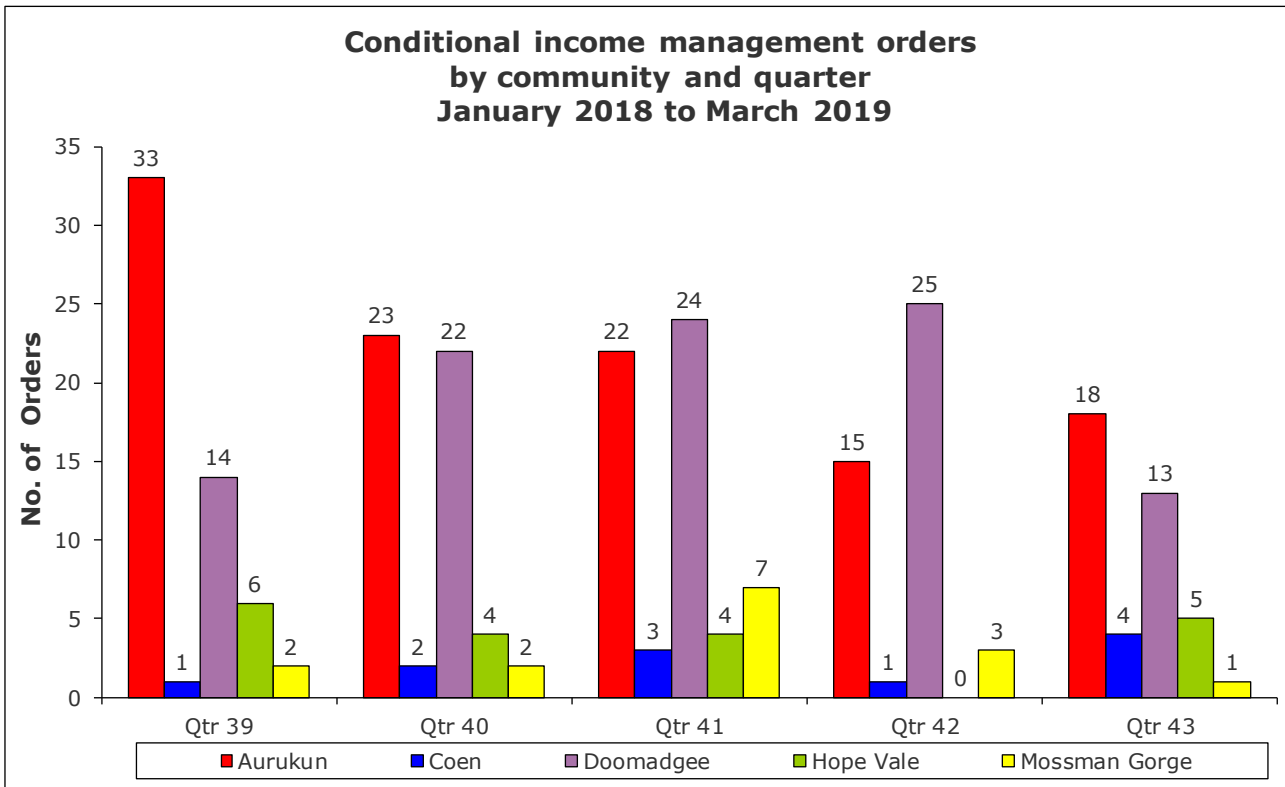
### Conditional Income Management

A total of 41 CIM orders were made in quarter 43, a decrease of 3 from quarter 42. Since the commencement of the Commission 2,500 CIM orders inclusive of original orders, extensions and amendments have been made relating to 882 clients. Further activity during the quarter is as follows: both Aurukun and Coen increased by 3 orders; Doomadgee decreased by 12 orders; Hope Vale increased by 5 orders and Mossman Gorge decreased by 2 CIM orders.

As at 31 March 2019, 36.9 percent of the Commission's clients have been subject to a CIM over the past ten and three-quarter years. As at 31 March 2019 there were 130 clients subject to a CIM which equates to 5.4 percent of clients on a CIM at a point in time. Commissioners continue to negotiate with clients to achieve desirable outcomes, or to demonstrate motivation and commitment to make appropriate life choices. Demonstrated positive steps toward taking responsibility provide the Commissioners with sufficient reason to consider revoking a CIM when requested by the client.

**Table 7:** Number of times a client has been placed on conditional income management per community  
1 July 2008 to 31 March 2019.

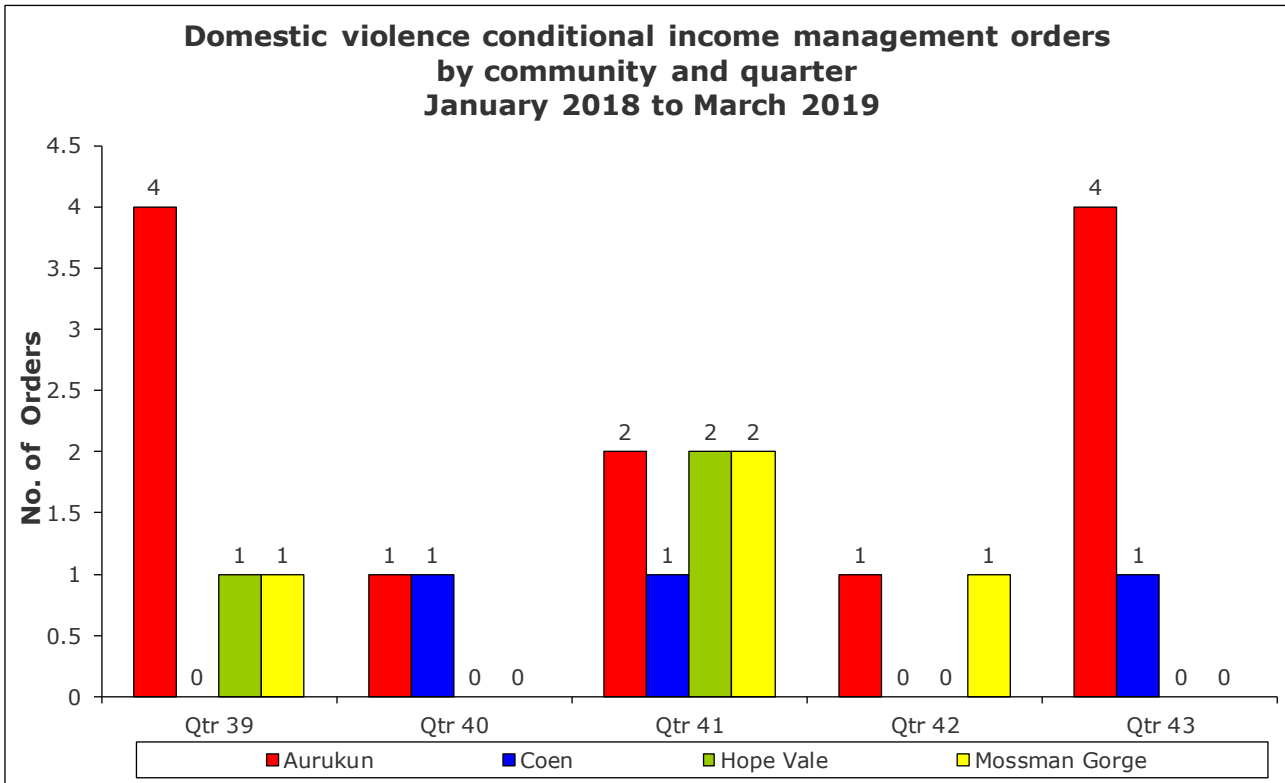
Number of CIMs	CIM'd only once	CIM'd 2-5 times	CIM'd 6-10 times	CIM'd 11+ times	Total
Aurukun	144	210	60	11	<b>425</b>
Coen	28	29	0	0	<b>57</b>
Doomadgee	36	70	0	0	<b>106</b>
Hope Vale	87	109	14	0	<b>210</b>
Mossman Gorge	29	34	19	2	<b>84</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>882</b>



**Graph 9:** Conditional income management orders by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

**Conditional Income Management for Domestic Violence related matters**

As a subset of the total number of CIMs in the quarter, 5 CIM orders inclusive of alterations were made in relation to domestic violence conferences in quarter 43, representing an increase of 3 from the previous quarter.



**Graph 10:** Domestic violence conditional income management orders by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

### Voluntary Income Management

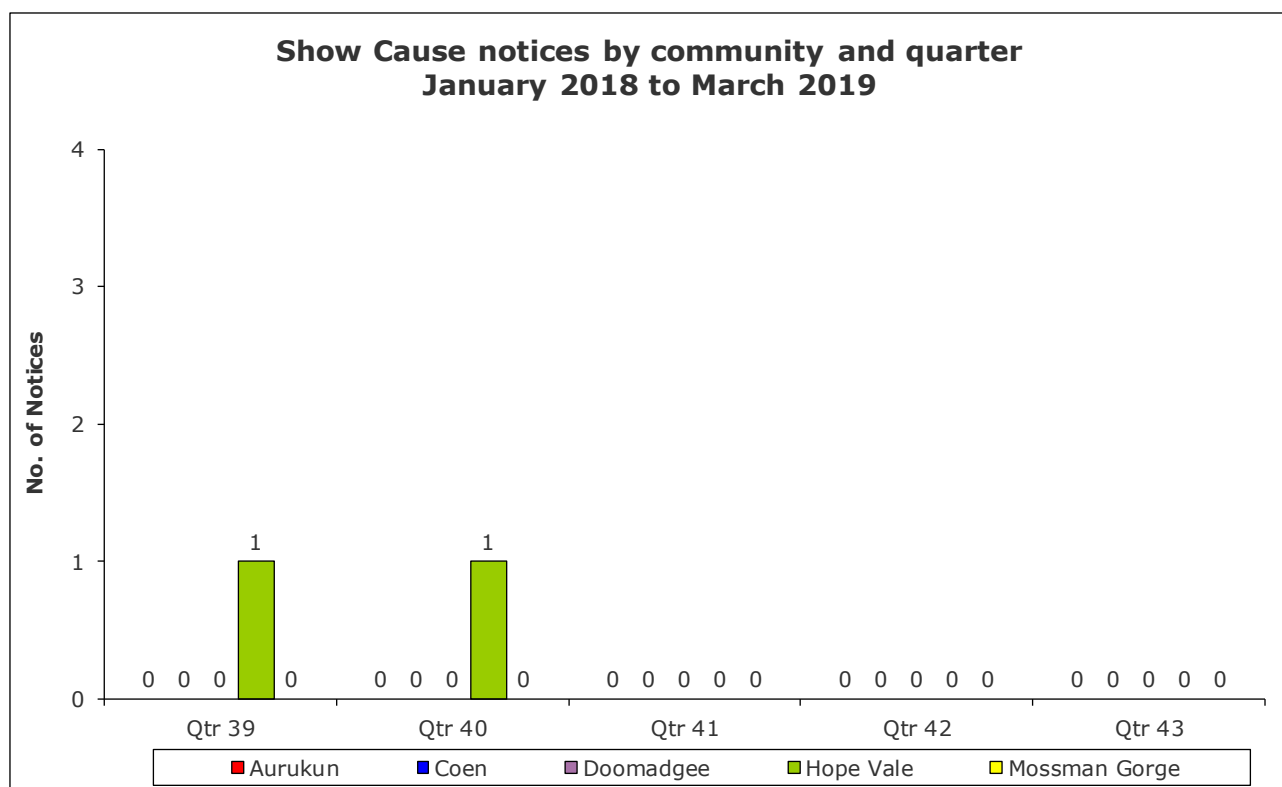
The Commission processed 4 VIM agreements this quarter and since the commencement of the Commission in 2008, 139 clients have had an active VIM agreement. Those clients that request a VIM agreement use income management as a savings and budget tool, often for a specified period and to deter family members from accessing their income.

### Case Management

As at 31 March 2019, 66 clients were being case-managed, a decrease from 74 in quarter 42. Aurukun decreased by 3; Coen increased by 2; Doomadgee decreased by 1; Hope Vale decreased by 5; and Mossman Gorge decreased by 1.

### Show Cause Notices

During quarter 43 no Show Cause hearings were held.



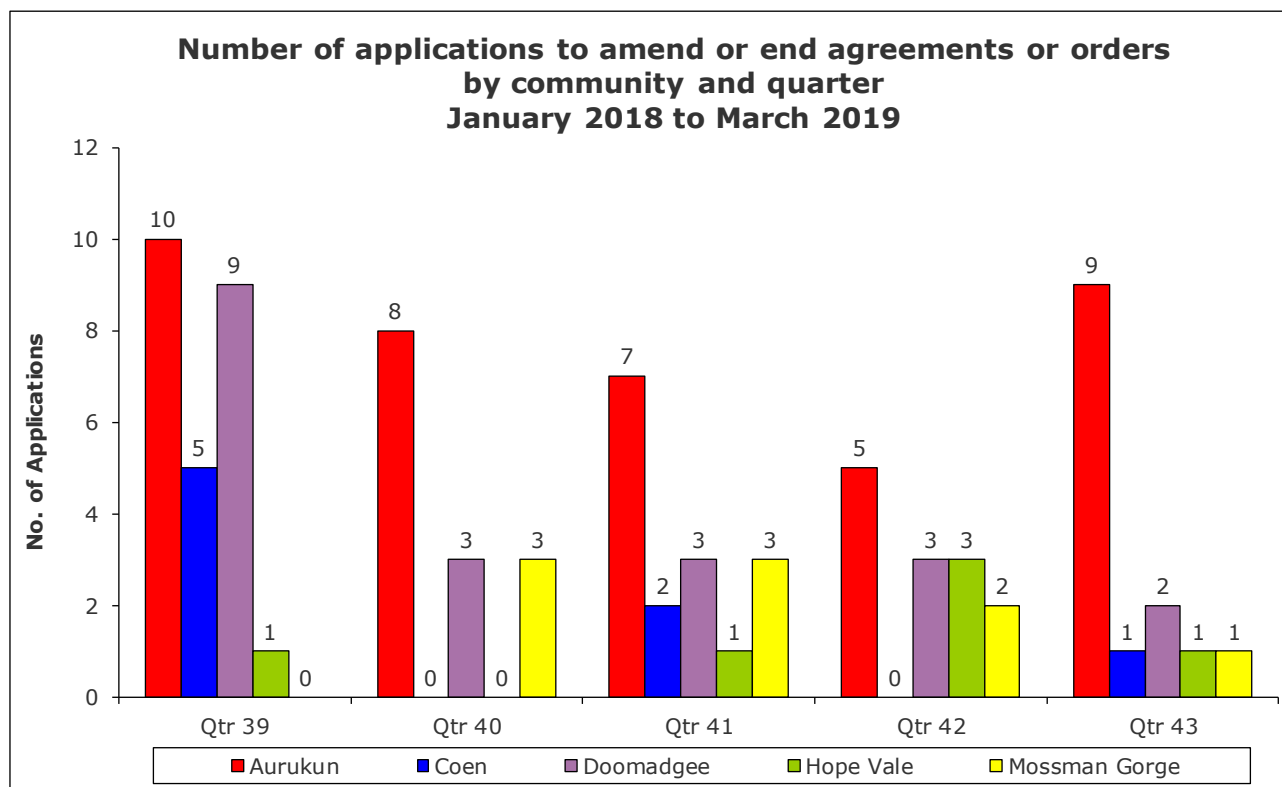
Graph 11: Show Cause notices by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

### Applications to Amend or End Agreements or Orders

Fourteen Applications to Amend or End an Agreement or Order were received in quarter 43, an increase of 1 from quarter 42. Outcomes of the 14 applications received are as follows:

- 7 Applications granted and income management agreements and orders revoked
- 1 CIM order percent reduced from 75 to 60 percent for the remaining period of the existing order
- 1 CIM order at 90 percent revoked and client placed on a new order at 75 percent for 12 months
- 5 Applications refused

The Commission continues to encourage clients to participate in the Amend or End process. Commissioners report increasing client confidence to question decisions and the reasons behind decisions, both for decisions delivered by the Commission and decisions delivered by external agencies and bodies.



**Graph 12:** Applications to amend or end agreements or orders by community and quarter 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

## 2. Future Direction and Challenges

### Local Commissioners

The mood and activity for quarter 43 was very much influenced by the appointment and non-appointment of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner respectively. The appointment on a part-time basis of Commissioner David Glasgow affected his ability to visit and support all five FRC communities, particularly in light of his relocation to Townsville in 2018 and no further support available from a deputy. The Doomadgee Local Commissioners were disappointed to hear of the non-appointment of Rodney Curtin as Deputy Commissioner from 1 January 2019.

Local Commissioners are conducting conferences in their own right, however, they have reported missing the support and mentoring provided by both Commissioner Glasgow and former Deputy Commissioner Curtin. The uncertainty surrounding the future of the Commission and Welfare Reform has affected conferencing and the morale of all employees and Commissioners, and has altered the perception of the FRC in community with service providers frequently questioning the Local Commissioners on their future.

### Service provision

Cape York Parenting (CYP) services have now wound up in each of the Cape York communities. The Commission's Client Manager has met with those organisations funded to meet the parenting program requirements for Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge to better understand the services available to FRC clients. Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care (RAATSICC) has proactively engaged with the Commission and are keen to set up a referral pathway. Meetings were also held with Gungarde Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation who are servicing Hope Vale, and Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation who are servicing Mossman Gorge. The Commission will continue to work with these services to set up referral and reporting pathways, and along with the Local Commissioners, work towards achieving positive outcomes for FRC clients and their children.

The Commission has not been receiving monitor reports from key support services which the Local Commissioners feel may be indicative that FRC clients have not recently been receiving any or adequate levels of service. Local Commissioners report that they are consequently reluctant to refer clients in many instances.

Referrals to Apunipima Cape York Health Council have dropped dramatically due to the organisation experiencing staff shortages, management changes in Aurukun, Coen and Mossman Gorge, and other operational challenges. The Commission has met with the CEO to discuss their program profile and offered our support going forward to re-establish engagement.

### School and Community reports

*(Note: school attendance percentages stated below have been provided by local school sources. They are unofficial, unpublished and may differ to those officially released by the Department of Education for term 2).*

#### Aurukun

Due to severe weather events Aurukun was landlocked for much of this quarter. Disaster funding brought a flow of money into the community which resulted in frequent gambling events. Local Commissioners reported an increase of fighting in community and the circulation of internet porn during the quarter.



The end of 2018 saw a large contingent of the school staff leave, including the Principal. Despite the large change-over of staff, weeks 1 and 2 of the new school year commenced well with attendance estimated at over 60 percent.

Aurukun community was shocked with the passing of local Elder and recognised artist Mavis Ngallametta early in the quarter and this sent a shock wave through the community. This was an extremely sad time for the community and the school attendance figures reflected the impact, taking an estimated 20 percent attendance drop. School attendance has continued to struggle with attendance estimated at below 50 percent.

#### Coen

Local Commissioners commenced conferencing with very few school attendance matters scheduled. The few school attendance matters that did come to their attention were mostly related to families unable to return to community due to road closures and severe weather conditions. The Coen campus of Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA) and all local services were required to close in preparation for Cyclone Trevor with many Coen residents taking shelter at either the Wellbeing Centre or the St John's Day Respite building. The ongoing weather events left the community struggling to keep up with food supplies and other amenities. During this period the shop shelves were empty and the power cut for over 24 hours. The lack of food in community affected parents who were left struggling to provide packed lunches for their children. Coen had some relief provided by the first food drops in eight years, however, they only consisted of basic provisions. It has been a rocky start to the year for Coen residents, and the community should be praised for their efforts in continuing to make school attendance a priority. Term 1 attendance was estimated at a healthy average of 90.6 percent.

#### Doomadgee

The first term of 2019 at the Doomadgee State School saw the introduction of a new Acting Principal and several new teachers. The new Acting Principal has reintroduced monthly parent and community meetings and this has been seen by the Local Commissioners and parents who have children attending the school as a positive move to creating a harmonious and constructive learning environment.

School attendance for primary aged students for term 1 2019 is estimated at approximately 65 percent, with senior level students averaging below 50 percent. Weeks 4, 5 and 6 of Term 1 were impacted by the disaster recovery payments received in community, although there was very little severe weather impact experienced in Doomadgee. The Local Commissioners report that they believe the payments resulted in an influx of alcohol into the community and increased domestic violence, both of which contributed to the low school attendance. The Acting Principal and staff of the school conducted numerous home visits during school hours and after school to draw students back into the classroom.

Sorry Business has also created a problem for school attendance numbers, with parents/carers opting to keep their children home during mourning. Many of the funerals during the quarter were postponed or delayed - in some cases for many weeks after the passing of a family member or loved one. As a result, the time between non-attendance and re-engagement at school was on occasion a lengthy two to four-week period.

The FRC Local Coordinator has continued to support local families with the transition of their children to boarding school. Assistance has been provided with application paperwork, identification requirements, organising school interviews, the distribution of itineraries and transport to and from the airport.

Collaborative service provider meetings recommenced after an absence in the last quarter of 2018. These meetings promote the sharing of ideas to provide wraparound services that holistically support families within the community. The Local Coordinator has worked with local service providers and DATSIP to ensure positive engagement with young people, including their participation in some after school programs and events.

The Local Commissioners commenced the New Year minus another colleague with Commissioner Karen Jupiter transferred to Townsville in late 2018 for extended medical treatment. Unfortunately, this relocation may become a permanent situation and the Commissioners report that it is challenging for the five remaining to maintain their energy, positivity and resilience with reduced numbers and the uncertainty affecting their future roles.

### Hope Vale

Both Cooktown and Hope Vale were isolated this quarter due to severe weather, with the bridge over Isabella Creek damaged. One conference sitting was cancelled due to the flooding. As a result of the severe weather, disaster payments were received by community members, many of whom then travelled into Cooktown to drink and gamble.

The Commissioners believe there are presently more children attending boarding school outside the community than there has been in the past. The Hope Vale campus of CYAAA reported having issues with boarding school students not returning and this then unfortunately affected Hope Vale's student attendance. Concerns were also raised by the community regarding a gambling game being played by the Hope Vale students called 'Ping'. The school and community together have addressed the problem and it would appear that it has now been resolved.

The Principal has reported that the school has achieved an average student attendance for Term 1 of 84 percent, and that 95 percent attendance was achieved on one Friday. It is believed that that is the highest percentage in the school's history. To maintain this increase in attendance the school is considering trialling a shorter school day on Fridays which it is hoped will also improve the student/teacher ratio.

Police report that break and enter offences have occurred in community committed by young offenders with ages ranging from 12 to 19 years of age. The older offenders appear to be targeting the elderly.

The CYP parenting program has transitioned to Gungarde Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation. This service is located in Cooktown. Parenting support is to be provided by the Family Wellbeing Service which provides support to families focussing on early intervention and keeping children at home safely with their parents. Although Gungarde are not resident in Hope Vale they plan to be in the community at least one day per week to visit clients in their homes as required. The Commissioners are hopeful that the community will embrace this change to enable effective service provision for parenting assistance to continue into the future.

### Mossman Gorge

Most families were ready to commence the 2019 school year having purchased books and uniforms via their Student Education Trust accounts set up through Cape York Partnership. A few families were affected by the severe weather conditions which created havoc for North Queensland towns and road networks, leaving the families stranded out of community and their children unable to attend the first week of school. Absenteeism was further affected by Cyclone Trevor which brought heavy rainfall and flooding to the local area. Some parents kept their children home during the torrential downpour, reporting that the rain left their children too wet and muddy before they even reached the bus stop. Conditions were exacerbated by unfinished roadworks in community. Mossman Gorge has been a work

site for the entire quarter (January to March) due largely to a problem with the appointed contractor which resulted in no further roadworks being undertaken.

Torrential rain also affected conference attendance with the Commission's Mossman Gorge premises badly affected by mould and water leakage. The Commission is currently liaising with Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Aboriginal Corporation's current CEO to access alternative accommodation whilst repairs are effected.

Despite the difficult conditions during Term 1, primary school attendance was reported at an estimated 69 percent for the 18 FRC Mossman Gorge identified students. High school student attendance continued to be poor and estimated at 17 percent for the FRC Mossman Gorge identified students. Although there are only three high school students, the attendance is well below average.

The Apunipima Wellbeing Centre has had a change in management and has also experienced difficulty retaining professional staff throughout 2018 and into this quarter. With the recruitment of new staff, a new program soon to be introduced which includes support for Mossman Gorge high school students together with collaboration with Department of Education employees to provide assistance for students during school hours, the Commissioners hope that positive outcomes will be achieved during quarter 44.

### 3. Financial Operations

#### Governance

Part 12 of the Act 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 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. The Board's membership consists of the following members:

- Dr Chris Sarra                      Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Chair)
- Mr Troy Sloan                      First Assistant Secretary, Legal, Employment, Environment and Evaluation Division, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Mr Noel Pearson                      Founder, Cape York Partnership representing the Cape York Institute.

#### 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 five welfare reform communities.

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

#### Financial

Income:

- Income received by the Commission for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019 totalled \$607,105. This income consisted of:
  - \$436,000 Queensland Government funding
  - \$156,500 Queensland Government funding – Doomadgee
  - \$0 Australian Government funding
  - \$13,225 interest received
  - \$1,380 received in sundry income.

The balance of available funds in the bank as at 31 March 2019 is \$2,543,626.

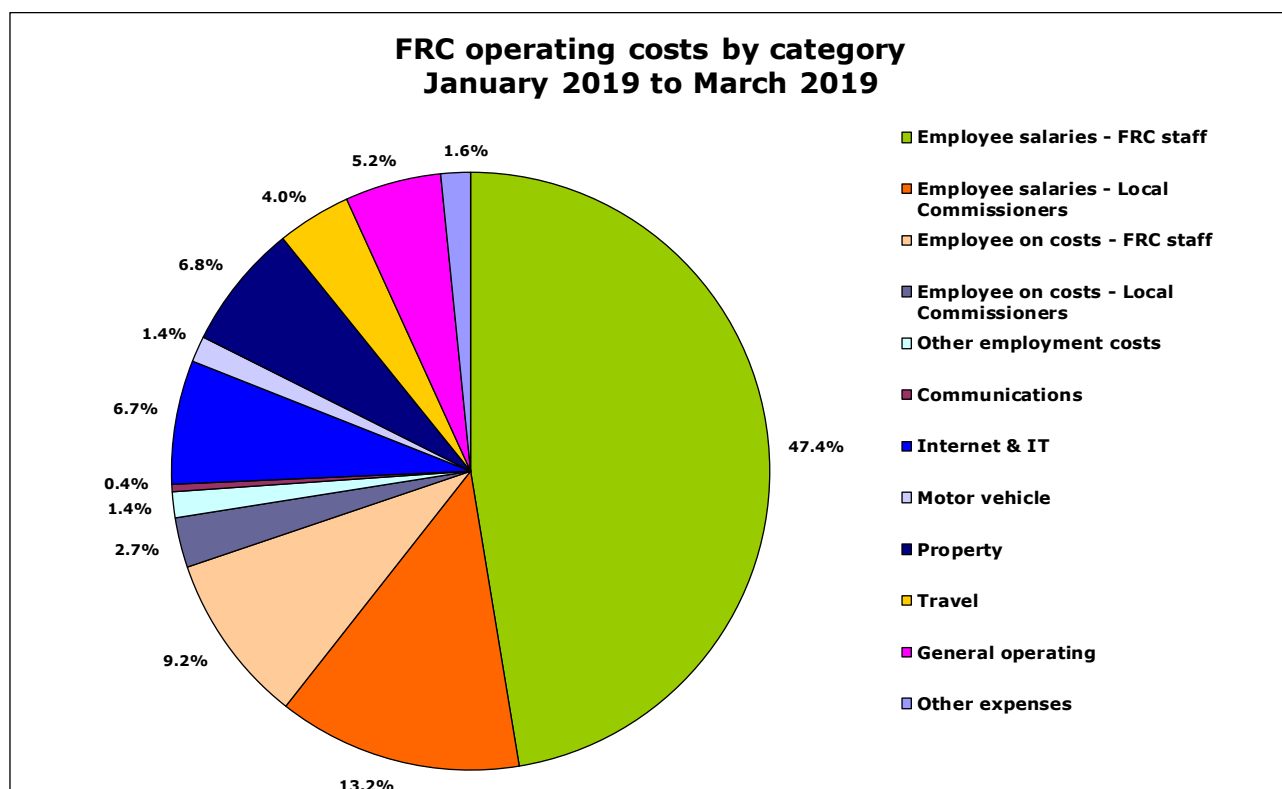
Expenditure:

- Expenditure for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019 was \$778,678. This total represents 22 percent of the projected annual expenditure of \$3,557,800.

**Table 8:** Expenditure in quarter 43.

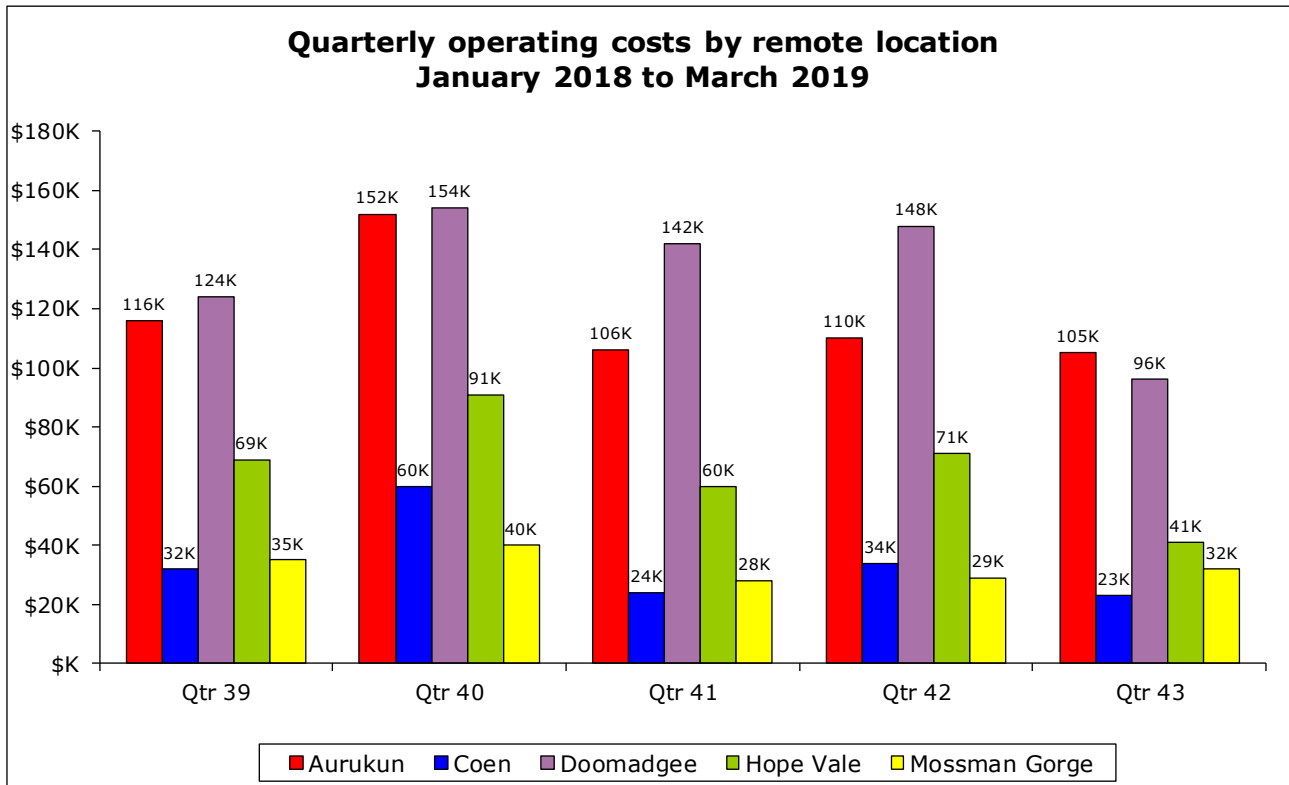
1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019	Expenditure Qtr 43	1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019	Expenditure Qtr 43
Employee salaries – FRC staff	\$369,105	Internet & IT	\$52,116
Employee salaries – Local Commissioners	\$102,475	Motor vehicle	\$10,819
Employee on costs – FRC staff	\$71,765	Property	\$53,168
Employee on costs – Local Commissioners	\$20,770	Travel	\$31,404
Other employment costs	\$11,194	General operating	\$40,454
Communications	\$3,005	Other expenses	\$12,403
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$778,678</b>

Quarter 43 disbursement of expenditure by category and percentage of total expenditure.



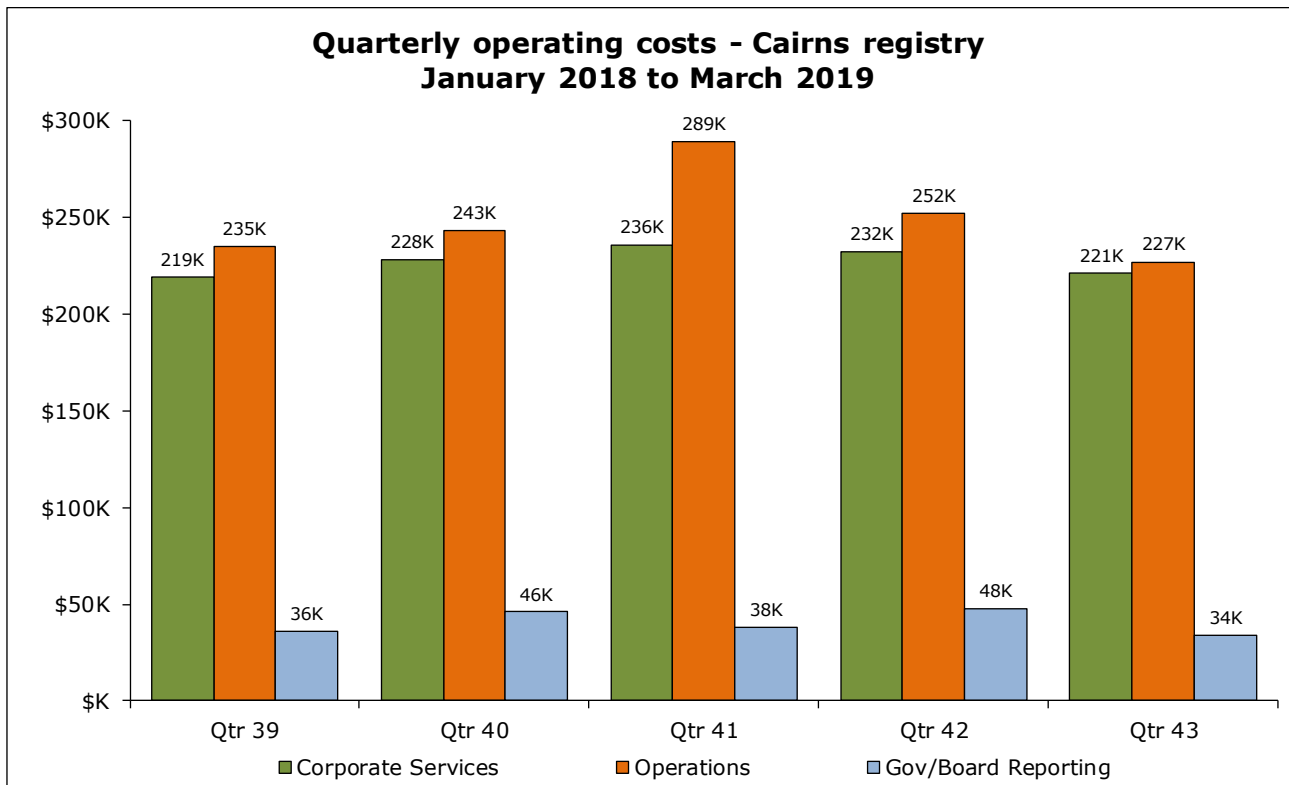
**Graph 13:** FRC operating costs 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

Regional operational expenditure by location and quarter.



**Graph 14:** Operating costs by remote location 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

Cairns Registry expenditure for quarter 43 compared to the previous four quarters.



**Graph 15:** Quarterly operating costs Cairns 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2019.

**APPENDIX A**



**SITTINGS CALENDAR 2019  
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION  
1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019**



Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Other
31 December		Public Holiday				1 New Year's Day
7 January						Cooktown Circuit
14 January						Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
21 January						
28 January	Public Holiday	29	30	30	1	28 Australia Day Public Holiday Proposed Local Commissioner meetings within community prior to conferencing
4 February		5	6	7		Cooktown Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
11 February		12	13	14		Aurukun Cape B Circuit
18 February		19 19	20 20	21		19 ASC Meeting
25 February		26 26	27	28		
4 March		5	6	7 7		Cooktown Circuit
11 March		12	13	14		Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
18 March		19 19	20	21 21		19 ASC Meeting
25 March		26	27	28		
1 April		2	3	4 4		Cooktown Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
8 April			10			Aurukun Cape B Circuit
15 April					Public Holiday	19 Good Friday 16 ASC Meeting
22 April	Public Holiday			Public Holiday		22 Easter Monday 25 Anzac Day
29 April		30	1	2		

**SITTINGS CALENDAR 2019**  
**FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION**  
**1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019**

Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Other
6 May	Public Holiday	7	8 8	9 9		6 Labour Day Cooktown Circuit
13 May		14 14	15	16		Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
20 May		21	22	23 23		21 ASC Meeting
27 May		28	29	30		
3 June	Public Holiday	4 4	5	6 6		3 Mabo Day – Doomadgee Cooktown Circuit
10 June		11	12	13		Local Commissioner Development Week - Cairns Aurukun Cape B Circuit Doomadgee – Gulf Circuit
17 June	17	18	19	20		18 ASC Meeting 21 Mount Isa Show
24 June		25 25	26	27		

**LEGEND**

	Office Days
	Public Holidays
	Aurukun Sitting
	Coen Sitting
	Doomadgee Sitting
	Hope Vale Sitting
	Mossman Gorge Sitting
ASC	Aurukun Shire Council Meeting
⊖	Cancelled Conference

OFFICE	CONTACT NAME	Phone	Mobile	Facsimile
Cairns – Commissioner	Mr David Glasgow	4081 8413	0439 776 798	4041 0974
Cairns – Registrar	Ms Maxine McLeod	4081 8412	0409 461 624	4041 0974
Cairns – Client Manager (Tue, Wed)	Ms Camille Banks	4081 8410	0438 195 342	4041 0974
Cairns – Acting Client Manager (Mon, Thurs, Fri)	Ms Anne Crampton	4081 8410	0419 647 948	4041 0974
Cairns – Finance Manager	Ms Tracey Patterson	4081 8411	0429 495 353	4041 0974
Aurukun Local Coordinator	Mr Bryce Coxall	4060 6185	0428 985 106	4041 0974
Coen Local Coordinator	Ms Sandi Rye		0417 798 392	4041 0974
Doomadgee Local Coordinator	Mr Robbie Hazeldine	4745 8111	0418 666 204	4041 0974
Acting Hope Vale Local Coordinator (Wed/Thurs)	Mr Brenden Joinbee	4060 9153	0408 482 026	4041 0974
Mossman Gorge Local Coordinator	Ms Sandi Rye		0417 798 392	4041 0974