

Family Responsibilities Commission

Report to the Family Responsibilities Board

Quarterly Report

No. 67

January 2025 to March 2025



Report prepared by the Family Responsibilities Commission under the leadership of Commissioner Tammy Williams and presented to the Family Responsibilities Board pursuant to section 144 of the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008.

The Family Responsibilities Commission publishes annual and quarterly reports on the Commission's website in line with its policy and commitment to open data available to the public. For more details see: www.frcq.org.au

Executive Summary

The Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC) is a key mechanism to support welfare reform community members and their families to restore socially responsible standards of behaviour and establish local authority.

The *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008* (FRC Act) provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (FR Board). The FR 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 Commissioner must as soon as practical after each quarter, give the FR Board a written report about the Commission's operations during the period.¹ This report sets out the Commission's key operational matters for the period January to March 2025.

Quantified in the table below are the activities undertaken by the Commission during quarter 67 with comparisons shown to the previous quarter.

Table 1: Activity from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025

Activity for the quarter	Qtr 66	Qtr 67
Total number of notices assessed by the Commission ²	1,690	1,544
Number of notices within jurisdiction	1,173	1,077
Number of notices not within jurisdiction	517	467
Number of clients notified to the Commission from notices within jurisdiction	655	661
Total number of notices received by the Commission which were unable to be assessed for jurisdiction	7	1
Conferences		
Conferences conducted	196	174
Number of clients served to attend conference	171	140
Attendance percentage for conferences	75%	59%
Non-attendance percentage with acceptable (reasonable) excuse for conferences	18%	37%
Conference outcomes		
Agreements to attend community support services	63	33
Orders made to attend community support services	30	23
Referrals to service providers from Family Responsibilities Agreements and Family Responsibilities Orders ³	112	65
Agreements for Conditional Income Management (CIM)	0	0
Orders made for CIM	11	7

¹ Section 144 *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*

² Agency notices are counted on the basis of the number of persons named on the notice (e.g. a Child Safety and Welfare notice relating to two parents is counted as two notices and if three children from one family have an unexplained absence from school for all or part of any three school days during a school term, this counts as three individual School Attendance notices against each person listed on the notice). Counting rules also stipulate that where multiple charges are received on a court notice each charge is counted as an individual notice.

³ An agreement and a decision can have multiple case plans which in turn can have multiple referrals where a service provider has multiple programs.

Domestic Violence statistical information as a subset from the total number of conferences conducted, referrals made and CIMs put in place	Qtr 66	Qtr 67
Conferences for domestic violence matters	49	37
Referrals from domestic violence conferences	33	24
CIM's from domestic violence conferences	5	3
Amend/end decisions for Family Responsibilities Agreements and Family Responsibilities Orders		
Number of amend/end decisions for Family Responsibilities Agreements and Family Responsibilities Orders	2	0
Accepted	50%	-
Refused	50%	-
Voluntary Agreements		
Voluntary agreements for a voluntary case plan (VCP)	22	94
Voluntary referrals to service providers	22	95
Voluntary agreements for Voluntary Income Management (VIM)	16	35
Amend/end decisions for Voluntary Agreements		
Number of amend/end decisions for Voluntary Agreements	6	2
Accepted	100%	100%
Refused	0%	0%
Other activity		
Applications to Amend or End received	7	3
Information as at the last day of the quarter		
Number of clients case-managed through current non-voluntary case plan	134	129
Number of clients subject to a current CIM	20	16
Number of clients on a current VIM	40	56

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Abbreviations

AU	Aurukun
CO	Coen
CP	Case plan
CPA	Case plan agreement
CPO	Case plan order
CS	Child safety and welfare notice
CIM	Conditional Income Management
DIS	District Court notice
DM	Doomadgee
DVB	Domestic Violence Breach
DVO	Domestic Violence Order
EQ	School attendance notice
FRA	Family Responsibilities Agreement
FRC	Family Responsibilities Commission
HT	Housing tenancy breach
HV	Hope Vale
MAG	Magistrates Court notice
MG	Mossman Gorge
NFA	No further action
SEN	School enrolment notice
VCP	Voluntary Case Plan
VIM	Voluntary Income Management

Also:

Family Responsibilities Commission (the Commission)
Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (the Act)
Family Responsibilities Commission Registry (the registry)
Family Responsibilities Board (the FR Board)

Family Responsibilities Commission Welfare Reforms

Report to 31 March 2025.

1. Activities and Trends

Client issues and interactions during the quarter

The Commission delivers services to communities which are culturally unique and geographically remote. Each community is different, however, each can be characterised by the entrenched disadvantage of Indigenous community members. Over-crowded housing, high rates of welfare dependency and multi-generational poverty have resulted in communities with high numbers of individuals and families with complex needs.

Many clients experience a complexity of issues.

Data collected by the FRC provides insight into the complexity of the issues faced by many clients. Table 2 sets out the different types of agency notices assessed as within jurisdiction by individual clients during the reporting period. During quarter 67, 591 clients (89%) were notified to the Commission with only one type of trigger notice. The remaining 70 clients (11%) received more than one type of trigger notice.

Table 2: Number of clients by number of different types of agency notices assessed as within jurisdiction 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025

Type of Different Types of Agency Notices Received	Number of clients
1	591
2	60
3	9
4	1
Total	661

Investigations reveal the following information regarding the types of sole trigger notices assessed as within jurisdiction by Commission clients during the quarter:

- 64% received a school attendance (EQ) notice
- 12% received a Magistrates Court (MAG) notice
- 7% received a domestic violence order (DVO) notice
- 3% received a child safety and welfare (CS) notice
- 1% received a Childrens Court (CHI) notice
- 1% received a District Court (DIS) notice
- 1% received a domestic violence breach (DVB) notice.

The remaining sole trigger notices assessed as within jurisdiction for Commission clients during the quarter were 2 clients with a housing tenancy breach notice (HT).

Table 3 shows the combination of trigger notices assessed as within jurisdiction for the 70 clients with more than one type of trigger notice. One can see that predominantly there is a nexus between Court convictions and domestic violence orders/breaches with education notices and child safety issues, and also a strong nexus between child safety issues and education notices.

Table 3: Number of clients with a combination of different types of agency notices (i.e. Child Safety and Welfare (CS), Domestic Violence Order (DVO), Domestic Violence Breach (DVB), Magistrates Court (MAG), District Court (DIS), Education Queensland for school attendance (EQ), Housing Tenancy Breach (HT) and School Enrolment (SEN) assessed as within jurisdiction from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁴

Type of Agency Notice/s	Number of clients
CHI,DVO,EQ,MAG	1
CHI,EQ	1
CHI,EQ,MAG	1
CHI,MAG	1
CS,DVB,MAG	1
CS,DVO	3
CS,DVO,EQ	1
CS,EQ	19
CS,EQ,MAG	2
DIS,MAG	1
DVB,DVO	1
DVB,DVO,MAG	3
DVB,EQ	1
DVB,MAG	5
DVO,EQ	3
DVO,EQ,MAG	1
DVO,MAG	9
EQ,MAG	16
Total	70

Client interactions with the Commission fall within a continuum of decisions available.

The following data (tables 4 to 8) provides an overview of interactions that have taken place with clients during this reporting period, consisting of decisions where a final determination has taken place in conference and includes decisions delivered at application hearings. It does not include instances where a client was rescheduled to another conference due to non-attendance, or a conference was adjourned to another date to allow the parties to address matter/s prior to the Commissioners making a determination.

The role of the FRC is to work with the most vulnerable, disadvantaged group of community members who engage in anti-social behaviours. Of this extremely vulnerable cohort who engage in anti-social behaviours there are a range of clients who fall within a spectrum of willingness to take personal accountability for their actions and accept support to address behaviours to those who are resistant to change.

Shown on the next page are the number of interactions (excluding reschedules and adjournments during the quarter) that resulted in a voluntary agreement, a decision by agreement or order, or a decision delivered on an amend/end application. The Commission is still seeing a number of interactions by clients on a more proactive basis, i.e. where engagement is on a voluntary basis (Table 4), or where acceptance of the Commission’s decision for a referral to a support service or income management is by agreement with the client (Table 5). These proactive interactions are considered to be a positive indication that community members are demonstrating early insight into the affect those actions have on others.

⁴ Refer to the descriptions of abbreviations on the Table of Contents page.

Table 4: Number of voluntary agreements (where a client has agreed to a voluntary case plan or voluntary income management) entered into from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁵

Voluntary Agreements			
	VCP	VIM	Total
Total	94	35	129

Table 5: Number of decisions by agreement (where a client has agreed to a case plan or conditional income management) entered into from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁵

Decisions by Agreement			
Community	CP	CIM	Total
AU	14	0	14
CO	1	0	1
DM	9	0	9
HV	7	0	7
MG	2	0	2
Total	33	0	33

Table 6: Number of decisions by order (including where the FRC has mandated a client be the subject of a case plan or conditional income management) from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁵

Community	CCP	CCP & CIM Concurrently	CCP, Rescheduled	CIM	No Further Action	Recommend Support Service	Reprimand	Total
AU	1	4	0	0	6	2	0	13
CO	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
DM	7	0	0	0	7	21	0	35
HV	8	2	1	1	5	4	1	22
MG	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	16	6	1	1	19	29	1	73

Table 7: Number of decisions on applications from a Decision by order and a Decision by agreement (where a client seeks to alter or end their original FRC decision because their circumstances or behaviours have changed) from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁵

Decisions on Order and Agreement Amend/End Applications						
Community	CCP End	CCP End & CIM End	CIM Amend	CIM End	No Further Action	Total
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 8: Number of decisions of voluntary amend/end applications (where a self-referred client seeks to alter or end their voluntary income management agreement because their circumstances have changed) from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025⁶

Decisions of Voluntary Amend/End Applications				
Community	VIM Amend	VIM End	VIM No Further Action	Total
Total	0	2	0	2

During quarter 67 the number of interactions highlighted in tables 4 to 8 related to a total of 197 clients (121 female and 76 male). To clarify the variability of client interactions, the following may occur during the reporting period:

- A client may be placed on a case plan at the beginning of the quarter to one service provider and then referred to another service provider later in the same quarter.

⁵ Refer to the descriptions of abbreviations on the Table of Contents page.

⁶ Refer to the descriptions of abbreviations on the Table of Contents page.

- A client may be placed on a CIM order quarantining 60%, 75% or 90% of their welfare payments and then have their percentage of income management reduced or increased later in the quarter.
- A client may be separately or concurrently placed on a case plan and income management throughout the quarter, and a client may be placed on an income management order but then placed on a case plan under a decision by agreement.
- A client may have entered into a voluntary agreement for voluntary income management along with a separate case plan to attend support services under a decision by agreement.

The nuanced decision-making of Commissioners at conference is reflective of each client's individual circumstances.

Clients with complex and multifaceted issues often require solutions which are best coordinated with multiple service providers who can extend assistance to family members. This requires the Commissioners to take a holistic approach to their decision-making by involving, where appropriate, family and clan group members at conference, together with a network of relevant service providers. The Commissioners, when making decisions, consider a variety of options. These may include not putting clients on case plans when they already have an appropriate referral in place, not making a referral because of the limited availability of appropriate support services to address the client's specific needs and the use of 'No Further Action' being made. The latter decision can be ordered in circumstances where the Commission is satisfied clients are already showing insight into their own behaviours and have taken personal responsibility to address the issue of concern before the matter proceeded to conference. This holistic approach assists in creating a more informative, culturally relevant and empowering experience for the client so they can make the necessary changes in their lives to provide for a safe and secure environment for themselves and their families.

The types of client interactions evident during quarter 67 reinforce the Commission's belief that a cohort of our clients are displaying a willingness to change and taking personal responsibility for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their families. The following highlights for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025 support our assertion:

- 67.0% of clients at some point during the quarter may have done one or more of the following: self-referred to the FRC for a VCP or a VIM; entered into a Family Responsibilities Agreement; successfully applied to end or amend their decision by order or agreement;
 - As a subset of the above, 73% of clients specifically entered into a voluntary agreement;
- 21.3% of clients were issued with a no further action on their matter/s, or they were recommended to attend a support service with or without successfully applying to amend or end their voluntary agreement with no other action types;
- 0% of clients were issued with a reprimand with or without a decision for no further action or recommendation to attend a support service or successfully applied to amend or end their voluntary agreement.

There also remains a cohort of clients who come before the Commission who struggle to develop insight into their actions and are less inclined to change their behaviours. The nuanced decision-making of Commissioners for these clients may include (as an option of last resort) a decision to income manage the client. These orders are issued as a means of holding the clients to account (and to create some stability in their lives, particularly if they are responsible for children).

The Commissioners have made the following decisions in conference for this cohort of clients:

- 8.1% of clients were ordered to attend a support service under a case plan;
- 0.5% of clients were placed on a CIM order;
- 3.0% of clients were placed on a CIM order and ordered to attend a support service.

Notices

In quarter 67 the Commission assessed 1,544 agency notices⁷ for jurisdiction. Some individuals may have been the subject of more than one agency notice. Of that figure 1,077 notices (70%) relating to 661 clients were within the Commission's jurisdiction, and 467 notices (30%) were outside the Commission's jurisdiction.

Table 9: Notices in jurisdiction by type and community 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025

Type of Notice	AU	CO	DM ⁸	HV	MG	Total
Supreme Court notices	0	0	0	0	0	0
District Court notices	8	4	0	0	2	14
Childrens Court	24	0	0	0	0	24
Magistrates Court notices	150	52	0	39	6	247
Domestic Violence Breach notices	8	1	0	5	2	16
Domestic Violence Order notices	36	12	0	15	6	69
School Attendance notices	178	7	308	136	23	652
School Enrolment notice	0	0	0	0	0	0
Child Safety and Welfare notices						
Child Concern Reports	12	11	10	7	2	42
Finalised Child Protection Investigations	2	0	6	3	0	11
Housing Tenancy notices	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total	418	87	324	207	41	1077

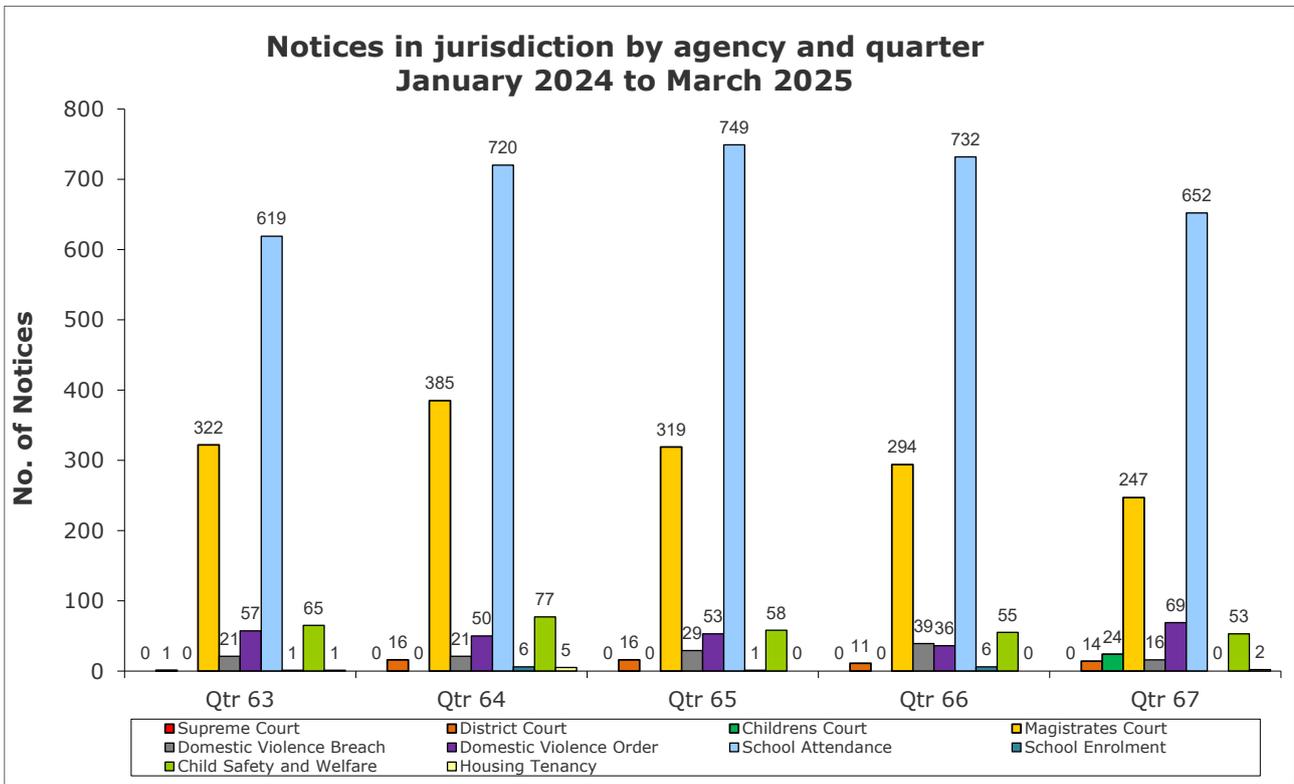
Further details of notices within jurisdiction for each community are set out below:

- 418 notices were assessed as within jurisdiction for Aurukun relating to 245 clients (153 female and 92 male)
- 87 notices were assessed as within jurisdiction for Coen relating to 35 clients (13 female and 22 male)
- 324 notices were assessed as within jurisdiction for Doomadgee relating to 214 clients (153 female and 61 male)
- 207 notices were assessed as within jurisdiction for Hope Vale relating to 139 clients (88 female and 51 male)
- 41 notices were assessed as within jurisdiction for Mossman Gorge relating to 28 clients (12 female and 16 male).

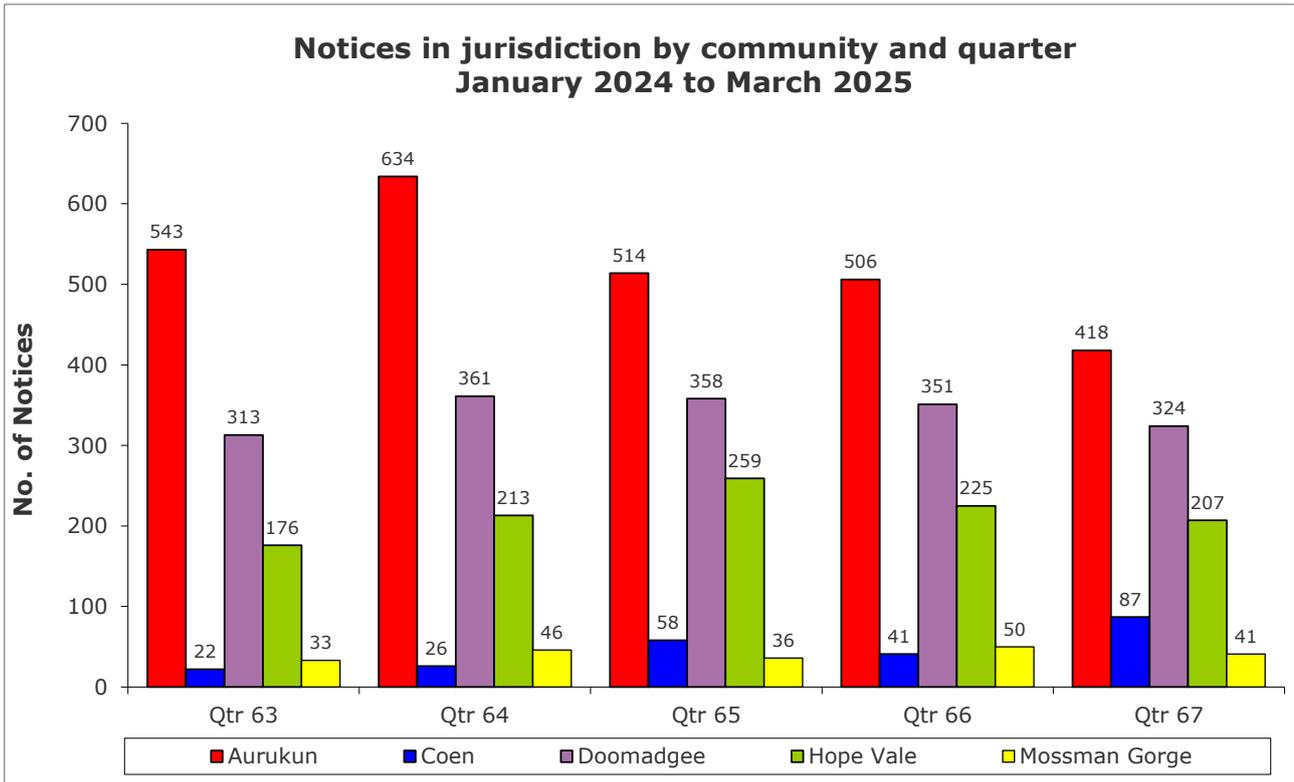
For quarter 67, 37% of clients were assessed as receiving more than one notice within jurisdiction. Frequently this illustrates multiple child school absences for the one family, or multiple Magistrates Court notices relating to one incident. This may also be suggestive of the complexity of behaviours experienced by a significant proportion of our clients. Conversely, it is important to note the majority of FRC clients (63%) were assessed as receiving only one notice within jurisdiction during the reporting period. Thirty-six new clients were added to the Commission's database during the quarter.

⁷ Counting rules are that an agency notice is counted on the basis of number of 'people' named on the notice. For example a child safety and welfare notice relating to two parents is counted as two notices and if three children from one family have an unexplained absence from school for all or part of any three school days during a school term, this counts as three individual School Attendance notices against each person listed on the notice). Counting rules also stipulate that where multiple charges are received on a court notice each charge is counted as an individual notice.

⁸ Agency notices for the community of Doomadgee are presently received from the Department of Education and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety only.



Graph 1: Notices in jurisdiction by type and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025



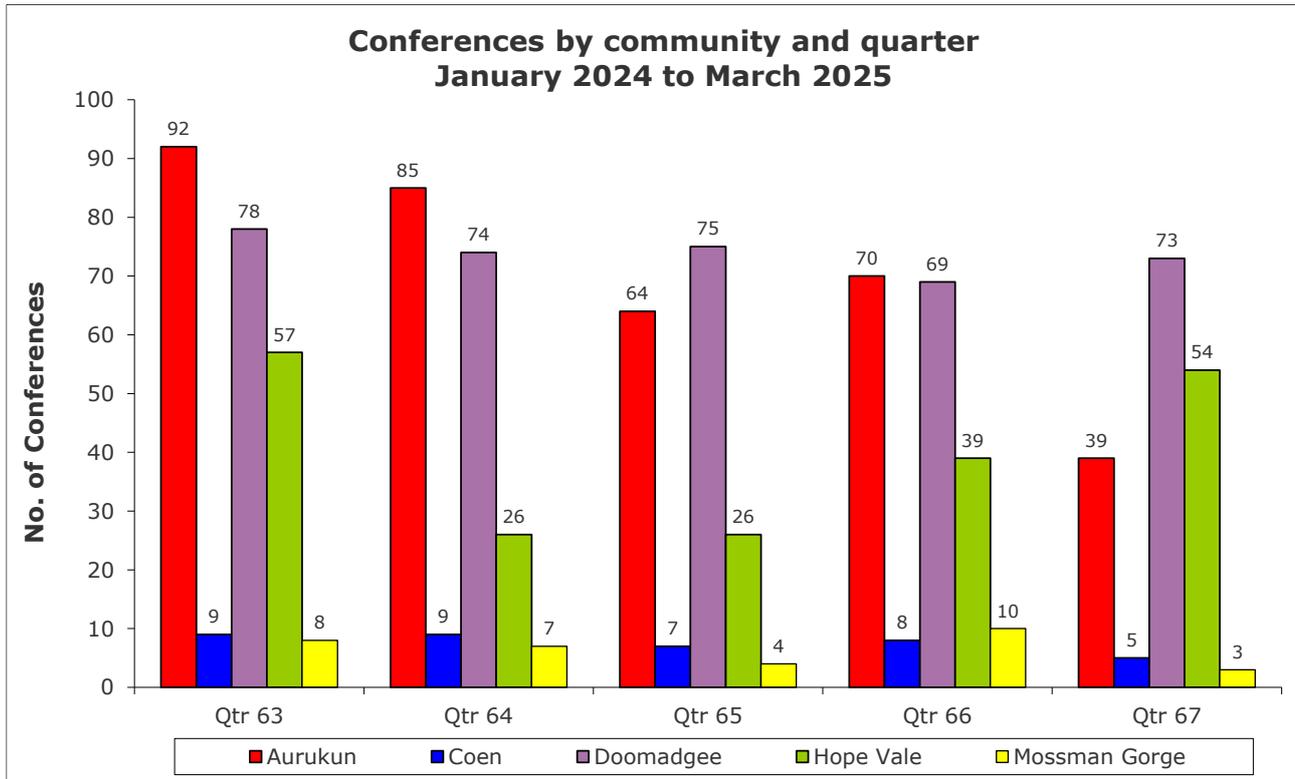
Graph 2: Notices in jurisdiction by community and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Notices received by the Commission which were unable to be accessed for jurisdiction

The Commission received one Childrens Court notice that could not be assessed for jurisdiction due to a lack of parent information recorded by the Court. The Commission was unable to generate a Services Australia Personal Information Disclosure (PID) for the child record (as they were under 16 and not receiving a welfare payment).

Conferences

In quarter 67 174 conferences⁹ were held across the five communities (relating to 140 clients served to attend conference). Attendance at conference decreased from 74.5% in quarter 66 to 59.2% in quarter 67.

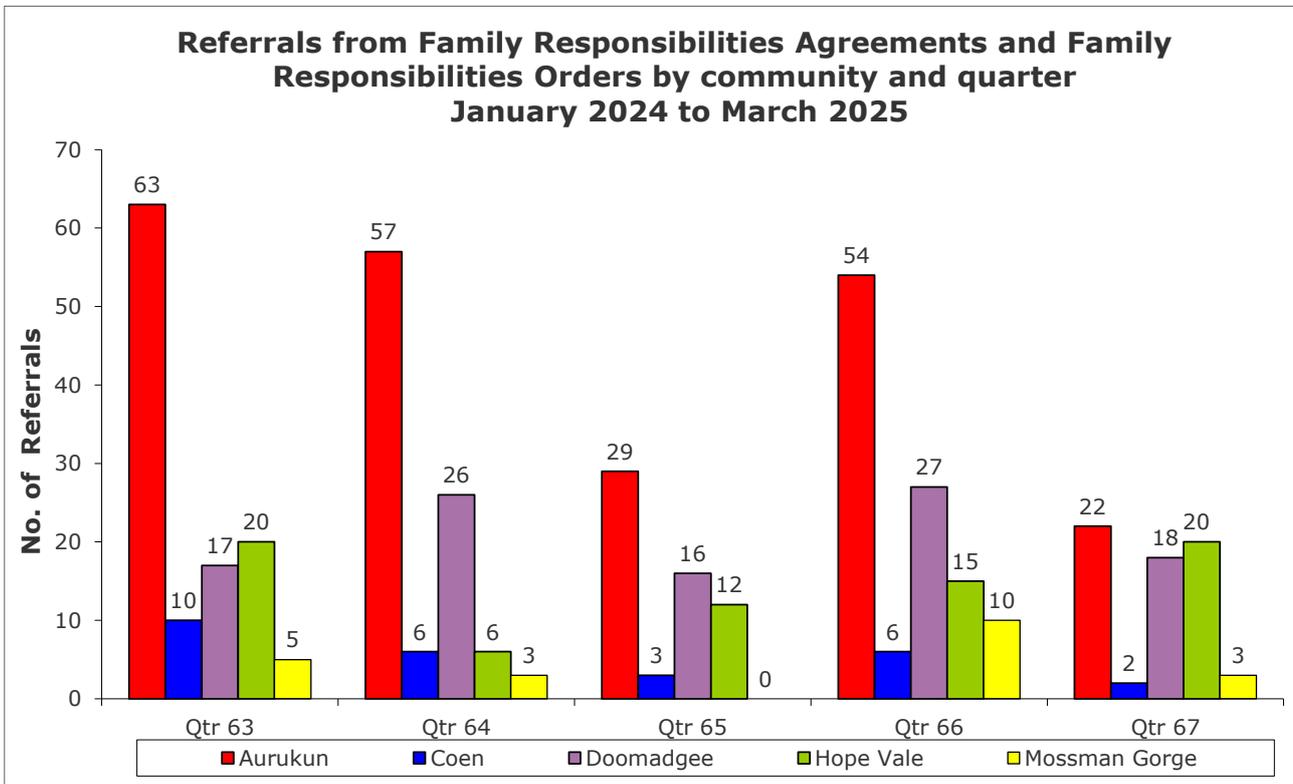


Graph 3: Conferences by community and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Referrals from 'Family Responsibilities' Agreements and Orders

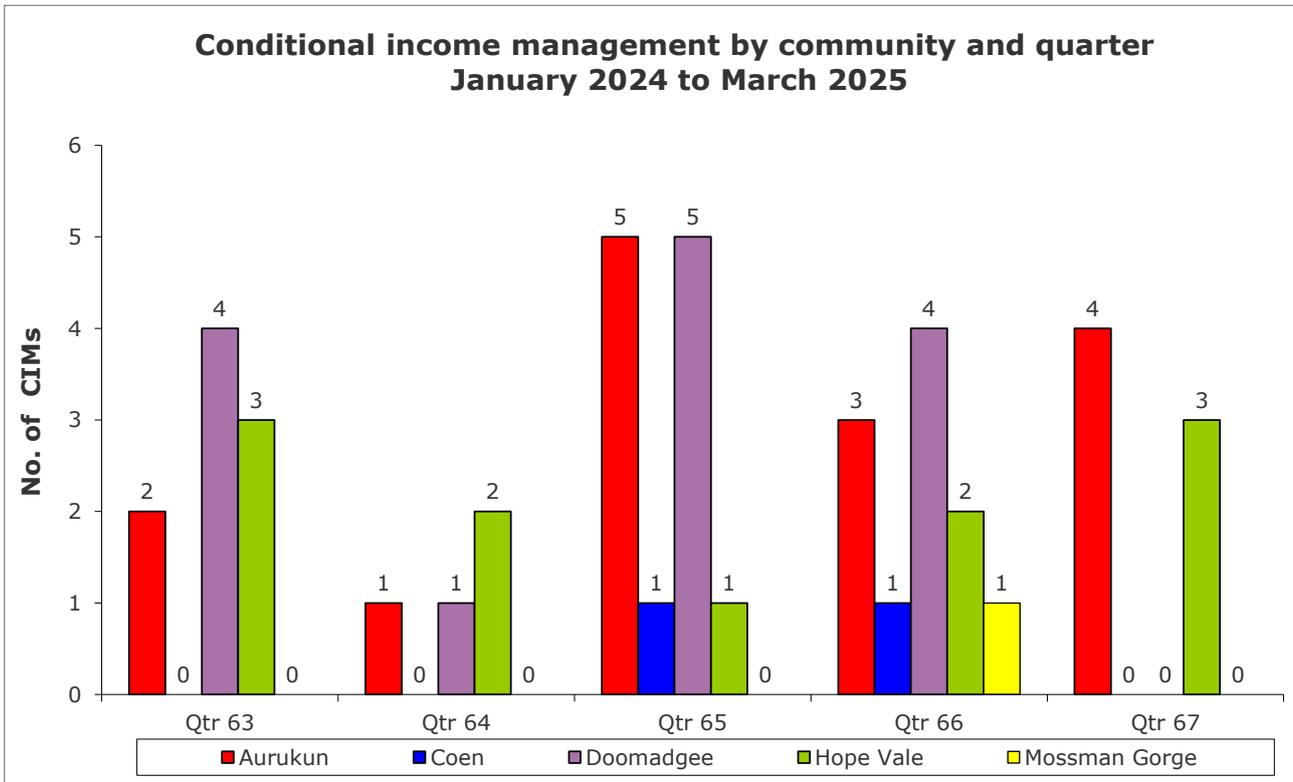
A total of 65 referrals (to service providers from 'Family Responsibilities' Agreements (FRAs) and Orders) relating to 56 clients were made in quarter 67. The Local Commissioners continue to raise concerns regarding the availability of appropriate perpetrator intervention programs suitable for client referrals so community members can be supported to address domestic violence behaviours. The broader social impacts of domestic and family violence are set out in Table 3 with an analysis illustrating the nexus between Court convictions and domestic violence orders/breaches with school attendance issues and to a lesser degree child safety issues.

⁹ The number of conferences held relates to the number of conferences listed, which includes where a client was served with a Notice to Attend Conference and subsequently failed to attend.



Graph 4: Referrals by community and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Conditional Income Management from 'Family Responsibilities' Agreements and Orders



Graph 5: Conditional income management by community and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Local Commissioners continue to use Conditional Income Management (CIM) as a decision of last resort. A total of 7 new CIMs (orders) relating to 7 clients were made in quarter 67 with 86% set at 60% quarantining of welfare payments (see graph 8) and 57% set for a 3-month duration (see graph 6).

As at 31 March 2025 there were 16 clients subject to a current CIM who were responsible for 27 children in their care (20 of whom were school aged children). Of the 16 clients 75% were income managed at 60%, 19% were income managed at 75% and 6% were income managed at 90% whilst duration ranged from 25% for a 3-month duration, 63% for a 6-month duration, 6% for a duration of 9 months and 6% for a duration of 12 months. 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 amending or ending a CIM when requested by the client.

Voluntary self-referrals from clients to the Commission

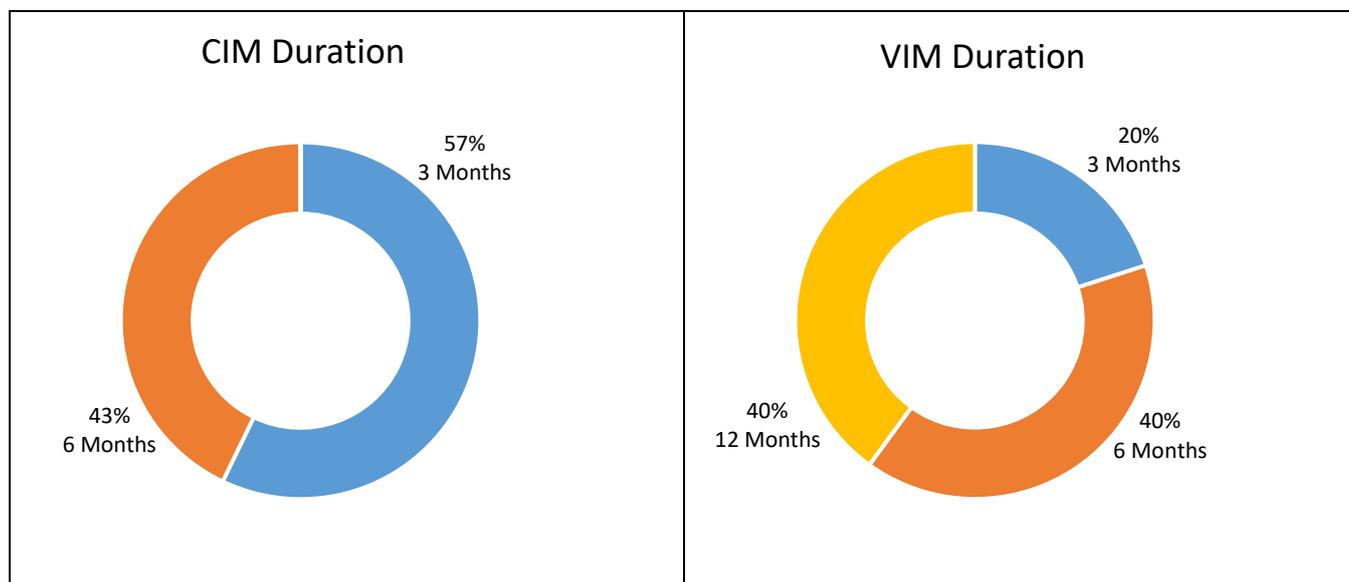
The FRC Act sets out a process under which a community member can voluntarily seek help from the Commission for a referral to a community support service through a voluntary case plan (VCP) or be subject to voluntary income management (VIM). During quarter 67, 94 VCPs were entered into for 95 community support services under a case plan relating to 85 clients.

Voluntary Income Management

During this reporting period the Commission processed 35 VIM agreements with 77% of agreements quarantining 60% of welfare payments (see graph 9) and 40% set for both a duration of 6 months and 12 months (see graph 7). As at 31 March 2025 there were 56 clients on a current VIM agreement who had 37 children in their care (25 of whom were school aged children).

Status of the SmartCard in FRC Communities for quarter 67

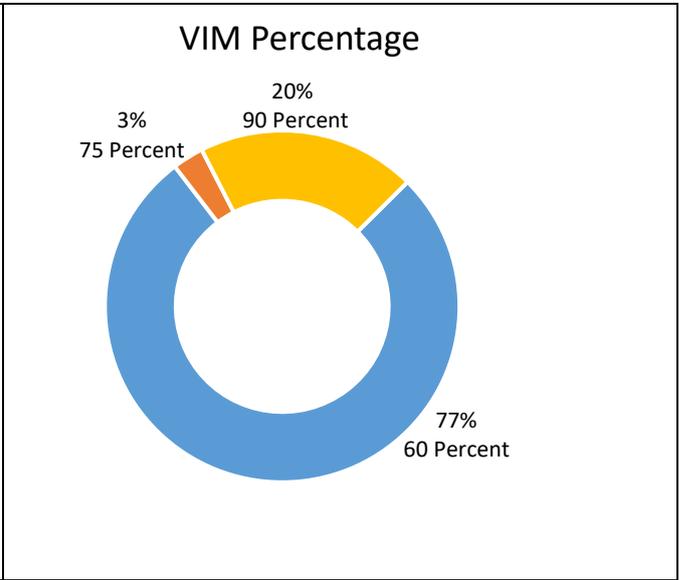
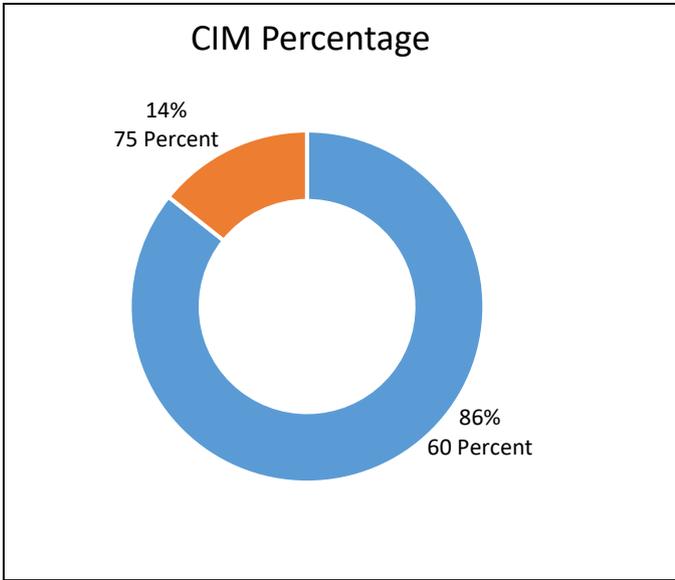
Forty-two SmartCards (7 for CIM and 35 for VIM) were processed for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025, including orders and agreements that were still awaiting Centrelink action as at 31 March.



Graph 6: Breakdown of CDC CIMs by duration 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

Graph 7: Breakdown of CDC VIMs by duration 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

Although initially (March 2021) 66% of VIM applications entered into were for a 3-month duration, the VIM chart above for quarter 67 shows that 20% were entered into for a 3-month duration, 40% were entered into for a 6-month duration and 40% were entered into for a 12-month duration.



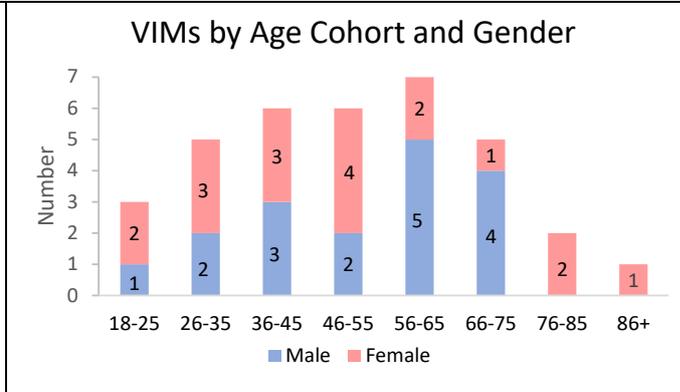
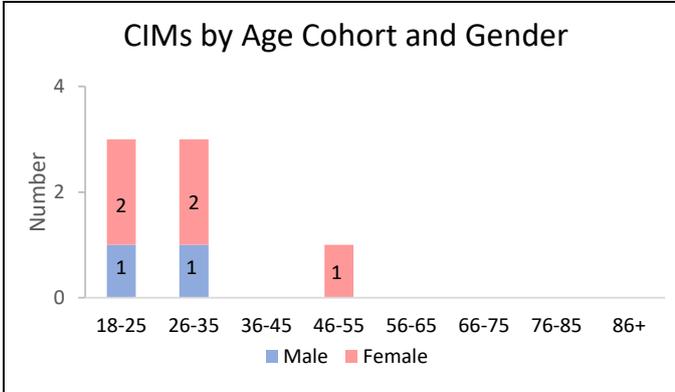
Graph 8: Breakdown of CDC CIMs by percentage 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

Graph 9: Breakdown of CDC VIMs by percentage 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

This quarter saw 77% of CIM orders issued quarantining 60% of a client’s welfare payment with 3% quarantining 75% of a client’s welfare payment and 20% quarantining 90% of a client’s welfare payment.

This quarter female community members accounted for the majority of the CIMs with 71% relating to female clients . No community member older than 55 years was conditionally income managed by the FRC during the quarter.

The majority of community members voluntarily participating in voluntary income management this quarter were from the 26 to 35 year age group. Females accounted for 51% of the VIMs. Overall females accounted for 55% of all SmartCards (voluntary and conditional) in quarter 67.



Graph 10: Breakdown of CDC CIMs by age cohorts and gender 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

Graph 11: Breakdown of CDC VIMs by age cohorts and gender 1 January 2025 – 31 March 2025

Reasons for applying for the SmartCard were primarily to buy food (57%), to budget (54%), to pay for bills (37%), to save for something they needed (37%) and to protect their payments (29%). Circumstances given by voluntary income management participants when applying for the SmartCard were to support themselves (74%), they needed to support their children (23%), they liked the SmartCard (23%) and they need to support their family (20%). Please note, a client may choose one or more options to reflect their individual reasons and circumstances for participating in voluntary income management.

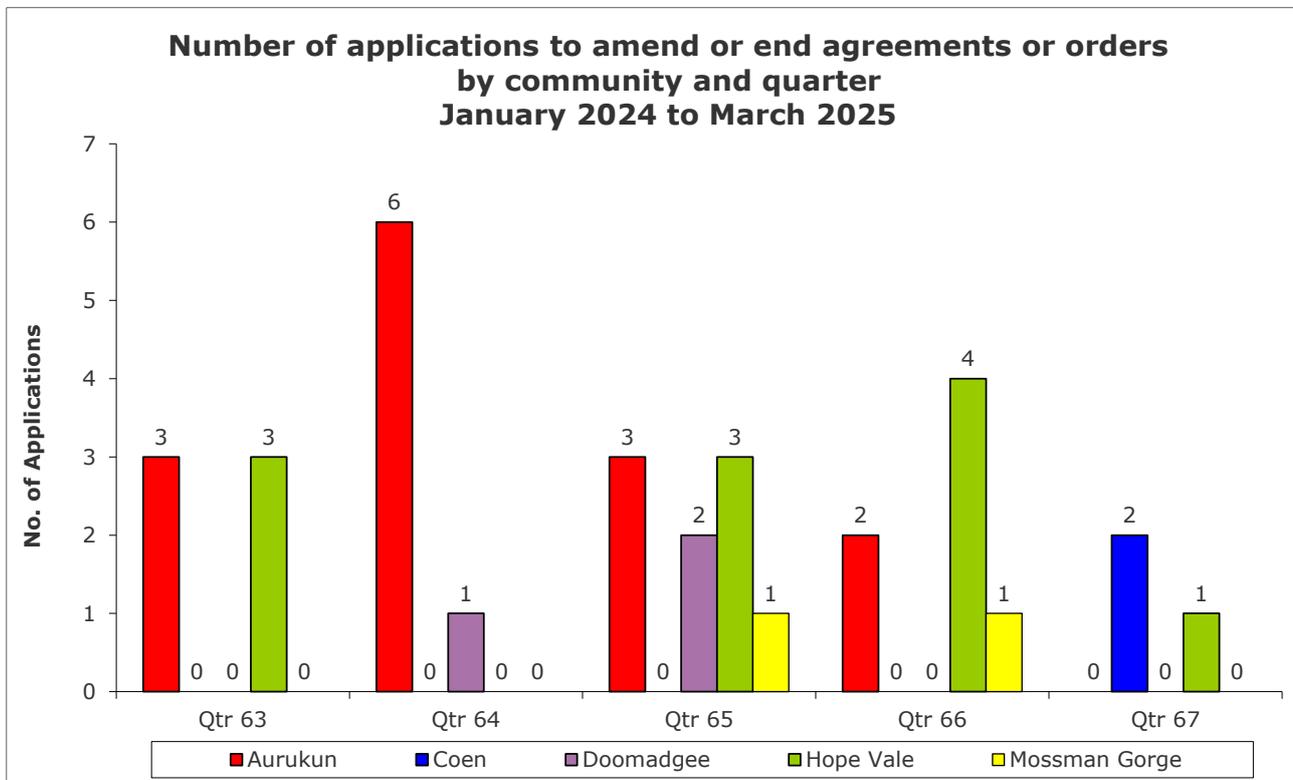
Case Management

Commissioners are guided by the FRC Act, sections 4 and 5, to encourage community members to engage in socially responsible standards of behaviour, and in doing so, make appropriate use of community support services. The Commissioners use the referral pathways available in each community to strengthen the client’s resilience to face the challenges they experience, and to ensure the wellbeing and safety of children and vulnerable people through broad-based counselling and education. After conference and for the duration of a case plan referral, the FRC registry liaises with clients and support services to monitor the client’s progress against meeting case plan goals. Where appropriate, clients are encouraged to make an application to amend or end their case plan to ensure their evolving needs are met. Commissioners then consider each application to ascertain whether the client has made sufficient progress to justify approving the application and in doing so must consider whether any detriment might impact the welfare of relevant children and/or vulnerable persons. As at 31 March 2025, 129 clients were being case-managed through a current non-voluntary case plan.

Applications to amend or end Agreements or Orders inclusive of Voluntary Agreements

Applications to amend or end an agreement or order are considered an important means of ensuring that FRC decisions remain applicable to the changing needs and circumstances of clients. This mechanism affords clients an opportunity to apply to the Commission to amend or end their agreement or original order by providing their reasons for making the application. Commissioners view the hearing of the applications as an opportunity to engage with clients.

Three applications relating to 3 clients (1 female and 2 male) to amend or end an Agreement, Order or Voluntary Agreement were received in quarter 67. It should be noted that a client may apply to amend or end their Family Responsibilities Agreement, Family Responsibilities Order or Voluntary Agreement on multiple occasions throughout a quarter.



Graph 12: Applications to amend or end agreements or orders by community and quarter 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Application decisions

Each application follows a transparent process and is considered by the Commissioners on its own merit whilst observing the principles of natural justice. A timely decision on the application is made under the FRC Act pursuant to section 99 for a family responsibilities agreement (FRA) or order, or section 109 for a voluntary agreement, and may include either agreeing or refusing to amend or end an agreement or order, or if the Commissioners deem the application for an FRA or order frivolous or vexatious, dismissing the application. For an application received under section 97 of the FRC Act, if the Commission fails to make a decision within two months of receipt of the application section 101 of the FRC Act determines that the failure is taken to be a decision by the Commission to refuse to amend or end the FRA or order. For an application to amend or end a voluntary agreement section 109(2) of the FRC Act states: "The Commissioner must amend or end a voluntary agreement as requested by the person, unless the Commissioner is satisfied the amendment or ending would be detrimental to the interests, rights and wellbeing of children and other vulnerable persons living in a welfare reform community area". The opportunity afforded in hearing these applications is utilised by the Commissioners to encourage clients to continue to address any remaining challenges and to exercise personal responsibility in their lives.

It should be noted that a hearing for an amend/end application may not take place in the same quarter as the application was received, especially where an application was received towards the end of a quarter with the resulting hearing scheduled for the following quarter.

A total of 0 amend/end applications for a Family Responsibilities Agreement or Family Responsibilities Order were decided in quarter 67.

Two amend/end applications for voluntary agreements were decided in the reporting period with both applications made by clients accepted by the FRC. A breakdown of the accepted decisions of the applications is as follows:

- 2 Applications were accepted and voluntary income management agreements ended.

The Commission continues to encourage clients to participate in the amend or end process. Commissioners consider that the participation of clients in the amend/end process is indicative of 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.

FRC client population by gender and age

Table 10: FRC client population by gender and age 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025

Information for the quarter	Female Count	Male Count	Female Average age	Male Average age
Clients for whom a notice was assessed as within jurisdiction ¹⁰	419	242	37	40
Clients conferenced ¹¹	96	44	36	33
Clients referred through Family Responsibilities Agreements and Family Responsibilities Orders ¹²	33	23	35	32
Clients placed on CIM ¹³	5	2	30	26
Clients referred through a Voluntary Agreement for a case plan ¹⁴	45	40	37	40
Clients who chose to participate in VIM ¹⁵	18	17	50	52
Clients who submitted an amend/end application ¹⁶	1	2	27	39

Estimated resident populations:

Aurukun: The community of Aurukun had an estimated resident adult population of 808 people as at 30 June 2023^{17,18}.

Coen: The township of Coen had an estimated resident adult population of 204 people as at 30 June 2023^{17,19}.

Doomadgee: The community of Doomadgee had an estimated resident adult population of 918 people as at 30 June 2023^{17,18}.

Hope Vale: The estimated resident adult population of Hope Vale was 667 people as at 30 June 2023^{17,18}.

Mossman Gorge: The Mossman Gorge community had an estimated resident population of 102 people as at 30 June 2023^{17,20}.

¹⁰ Average age of a client who had a notice assessed as within jurisdiction for the quarter is calculated at the date of the first notice assessed for the client during the quarter.

¹¹ Average age of a conferenced client for the quarter is calculated at the date of the first conference held for the client during the quarter.

¹² Average age of a referred client for the quarter through a Family Responsibilities Agreement or a Family Responsibilities Order is calculated at the first conference date held where the client was placed on a case plan during the quarter.

¹³ Average age of a CIM client for the quarter is calculated at the first conference date held where the client was placed on a CIM during the quarter.

¹⁴ Average age of a referred client for the quarter through a Voluntary Agreement is calculated at the start date of the voluntary agreement where the client entered into a voluntary case plan during the quarter.

¹⁵ Average age of a VIM client for the quarter is calculated at the start date of the agreement where the client was placed on a VIM during the quarter.

¹⁶ Average age of a client who submitted an amend/end application for the quarter is calculated at the received date of the application for the client during the quarter.

¹⁷ Note: Australian Statistical Geography Standard Edition 3, July 2021 – June 2026 boundaries for local government areas of Aurukun, Doomadgee and Hope Vale, and statistical areas level 1 (SA1s) of 31501139616 for Coen and 30604116408 for Mossman Gorge.

¹⁸ Note: Adults 18 years and over provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office (QGSO), Queensland Treasury, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) unpublished preliminary Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data by age and sex at the Local Government Area level for 30 June 2023.

¹⁹ Note: Adults 18 years and over provided by QGSO, Queensland Treasury, based on the ABS unpublished preliminary ERP data by age and sex at the Statistical Area level 1 for 30 June 2023.

²⁰ Note: Total population provided by QGSO, Queensland Treasury, not 18 years and older, due to the small size of the total population from the ABS unpublished preliminary ERP data at the Statistical Area level 1 for 30 June 2023.

2. Future Direction and Challenges

Childrens Court 'Trigger' reinstated by the Queensland Community Safety Act 2024

In August 2024, the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008 (FRC Act)* was amended to operationalise the provision of Childrens Court Advice Notices, otherwise known as the Childrens Court, or Youth Justice 'trigger'.

The FRC has been working with the Queensland Department of Justice, Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support, and the Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, and Multiculturalism to fully implement the notice requirements, including the provision of parent details, under s43 of the FRC Act. On 24 February 2025 Commissioner Williams used her powers pursuant to section 145 of the FRC Act to issue a Guideline setting out the procedures for the provision of, and receipt of Court Advice Notices by the FRC in circumstances where the person convicted of an offence is a child and is not a first-time offender pursuant to section 43(1)(a)(b) of the FRC Act. A copy of **Guideline 1/25: Receipt of Childrens Court Advice Notices** was sent to the Directors General of the relevant departments and took effect on the date of issue.

In that Guideline the Commission foreshadowed the need to make further requests to prescribed entities (i.e., Department of Justices) for information under section 93 of the FRC Act. In this quarter, the Commission commenced receiving Childrens Court notices after a lengthy absence of over 8 years with the Commission last receiving Childrens Court notices in quarter 32 (April-June 2016). Since March 2025, the Commission has received a total of 23 Childrens Court notices but has only been able to assess, and then verify, 22 of these notices as within jurisdiction. The remaining Childrens Court notice could not be assessed for jurisdiction due to a lack of parent information recorded by the Court and the then resultant inability to generate a Services Australia Personal Information Disclosure (PID) for the child record (under 16 and not receiving a welfare payment).

The Commission is undertaking a detailed assessment and considerations process to begin conferencing clients and their families. This process has confirmed the Commission's preliminary view that further requests for information will be required (such as, for example, sentencing details to understand what interventions are already in place, and whether children are currently in detention and expected date of release), so that the FRC can consider all the relevant information available to make appropriate decisions at conference.

The Commission will continue to work with key stakeholders such as the Department of Justice to overcome these barriers and operationalise the Youth Justice trigger as originally intended by the FRC Act.

3. Governance

Governance

Part 12 of the Act provides for the establishment of the Family Responsibilities Board (the FR Board).

The FR 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 FR 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 FR Board members must meet in person at least once a year. A quorum for the FR Board is comprised of two members. During quarter 67 the FR Board's membership consisted of the following members:

- Ms Kathy Parton Acting Director-General, Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism (Chair)
- Ms Jody Broun CEO, National Indigenous Australians Agency
- 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 Registry Coordinators.

4. Financial Operations

Income:

- Income of the Commission attributable to the quarter (1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025) totalled \$1,242,479. This income consisted of:
 - \$660,500 Queensland Government funding
 - \$515,000 Australian Government funding
 - \$66,964 interest received
 - \$15 sundry income.

The balance of available funds in the bank as at 31 March 2025 is \$5,176,760.

Expenditure:

- Expenditure for the quarter (1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025) was \$1,173,630.

Table 11: Expenditure in quarter 67

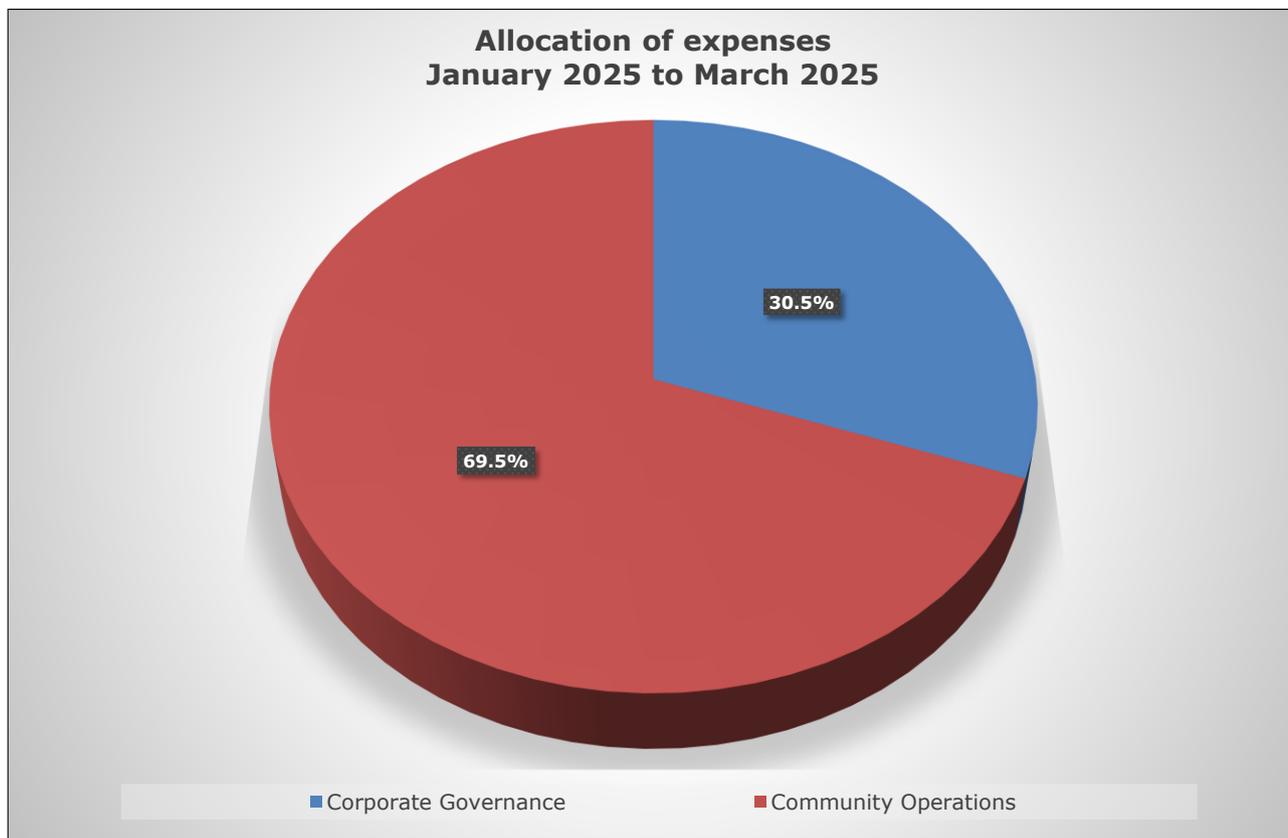
1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025	Expenditure Qtr 67	1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025	Expenditure Qtr 67
Employee expenses – FRC staff	\$736,083	Travel	\$84,271
Employee expenses – Local Commissioners	\$141,792	IT and Communications	\$30,365
Other employment costs (Agency)	\$48,053	Property	\$66,755
Other supplies and services	\$66,311	Total	\$1,173,630

The expenditure of the FRC can be categorised as follows:

- **Community operations** – further broken down into:
 - **On-the-ground community operational expenses** including the operational expenses in each of the five communities to conduct conferences and hearings, prepare and monitor case plans for clients for attendance at community support services and prepare and monitor income management orders and agreements.
 - **Support and facilitation expenses** including costs associated with facilitating the holding of conferences and hearings in the five communities, providing support to the Local Commissioners and Local Registry Coordinators to hold conferences and hearings, assisting with the on-going monitoring of case plans for clients through the provision of data and other information and processing income management orders and agreements.
- **Corporate governance** includes finance, statistical reporting, corporate governance, compliance, IT, training and other administrative functions to ensure the effective and efficient operations of the Commission.

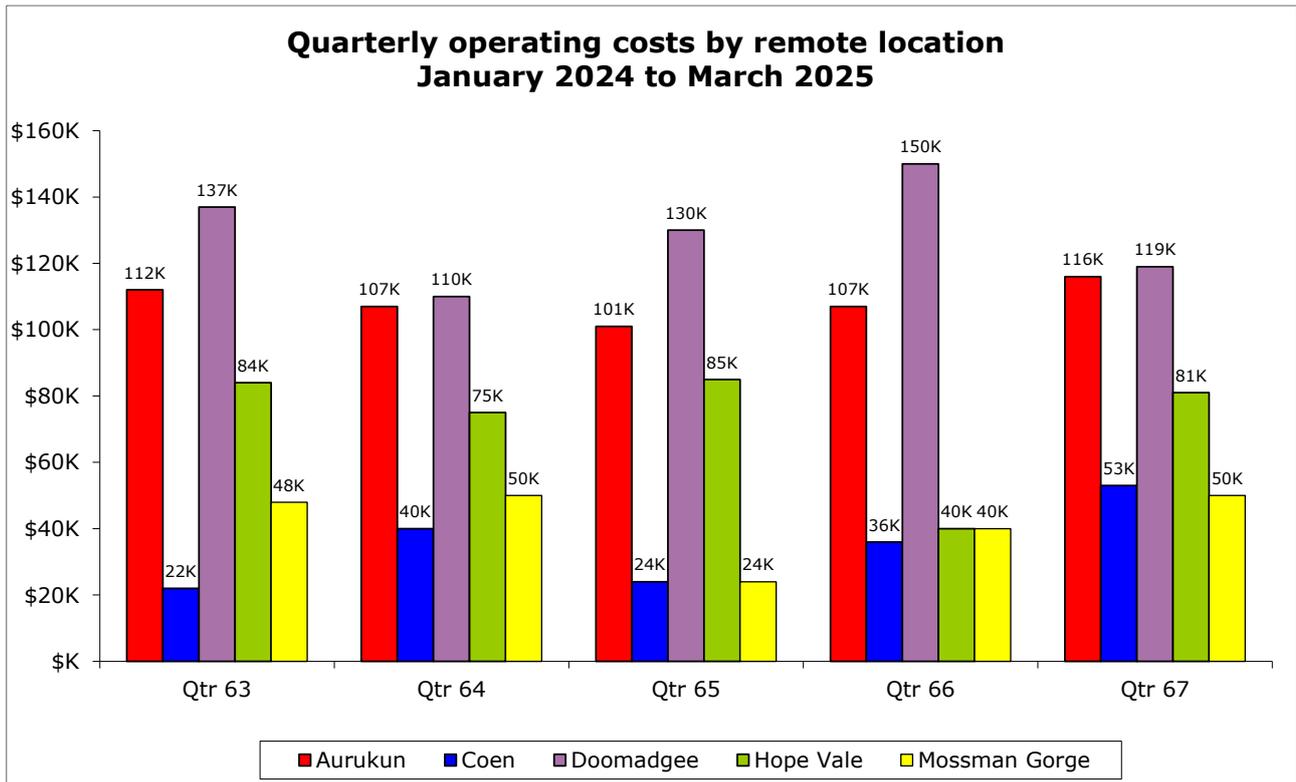
The functions of corporate governance and conference and hearing facilitation are conducted primarily in the registry office in Cairns with frequent visits to community by staff. Community operations are conducted by Local Registry Coordinators and Local Commissioners, resident in their respective communities, who are paid as sessional sitting Commission members for conferencing, serving notices, meetings and professional development.

As can be observed in Graph 13 below which displays the allocation of FRC costs across the core functions in quarter 67, the largest allocation during the reporting period is in relation to community operations (69.5%).



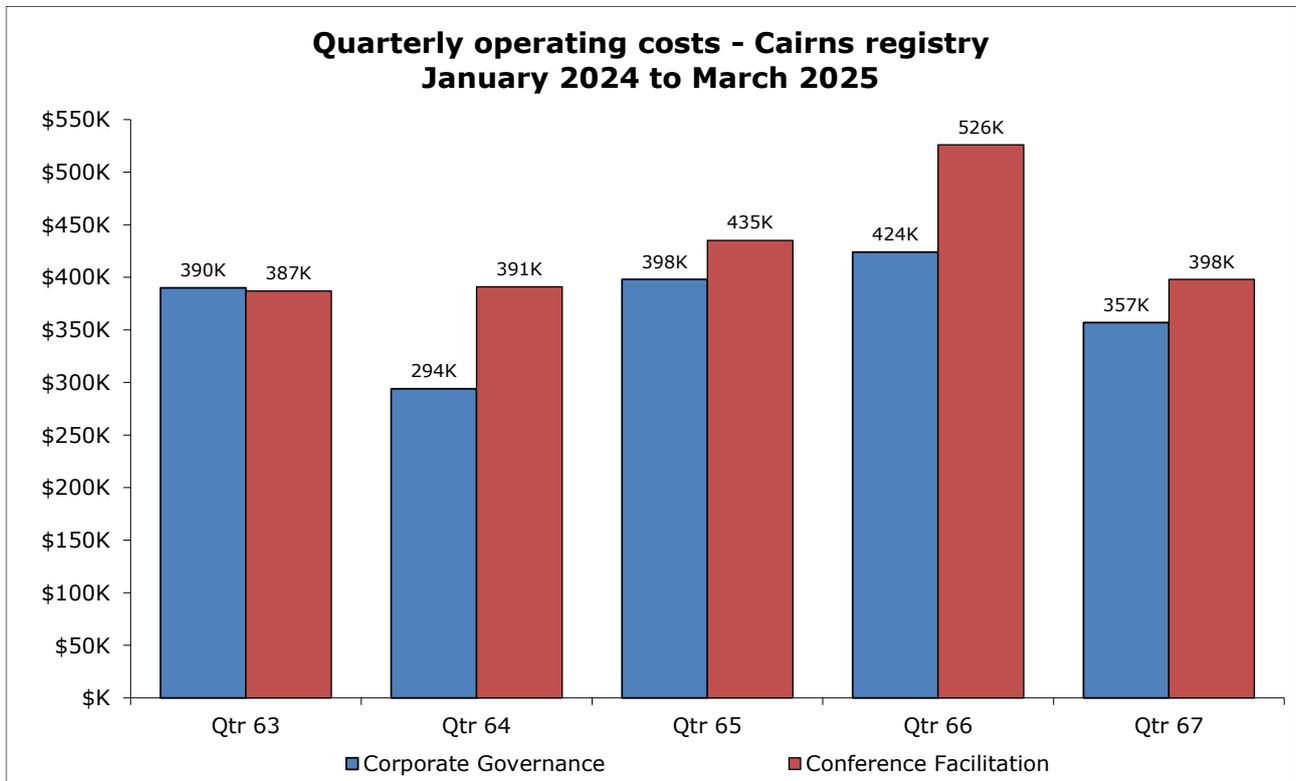
Graph 13: Allocation of expenses 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025

Regional operational expenditure by location and quarter.



Graph 14: Operating costs by remote location 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

Cairns Registry expenditure for quarter 67 compared to the previous four quarters.



Graph 15: Quarterly operating costs Cairns 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025

APPENDIX A



SITTINGS AND CLIENT ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR 2025
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES COMMISSION
1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025



Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Other
30 December			Public Holiday			1 New Year's Day Public Holiday
6 January						Cooktown Circuit Hope Vale Circuit
13 January		14 CE	15 CE	16 ½ day CE		Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit
20 January		21 CE	22 CE	23 CE		Doomadgee Circuit
		21 CE	22 CE	23 CE		
		21 CE	22 CE	23 CE		
		21 CE	22 CE	23 CE		
		21 CE	22 CE	23 CE		
27 January	Public Holiday					27 Australia Day Public Holiday
3 February	3 ½ day CE	4 CE	5 CE	6 ½ day CE		Cooktown Circuit Hope Vale Circuit
	3 CE	4 CE	5 ½ day CE			
		4 ½ day CE				
10 February	10 ½ day CE	11 CE/ATSILs	12 CE/ATSILs	13 CE/ATSILs		Aurukun Cape B Circuit Doomadgee Gulf Circuit
	10 ½ day CE	11 CE	12 Conf	13 Conf		
		11 CE	12 Conf	13 Conf 13 CE		
17 February	17 ½ day CE	18 CE	19 CE	20 ½ day CE		
24 February	24 ½ day CE	25 CE	26 Conf	27 Conf		
		25 CE	26 Conf	27 CE		
		25 ½ day Conf 25 ½ day CE				
3 March	3 ½ day CE	4 Conf	5 Conf	6 ½ day CE		Cooktown Circuit
10 March	10 ½ day CE	11 CE	12 Conf	13 Conf		Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit Doomadgee Gulf Circuit
		11 CE	12 CE	13 CE		
		11 CE	12 Conf	13 CE		
17 March	17 ½ day CE	18 Conf	19 Conf	20 ½ day CE		
		18 CE	19 Conf	20 ½ day CE		
24 March	24 ½ day CE	25 CE	26 Conf	27 Conf		
		25 CE	26 Conf	27 CE		
31 March	31 ½ day CE	1 Conf	2 Conf 2 CE	3 ½ day CE		Cooktown Circuit Doomadgee Gulf Circuit
7 April		8 CE	9 CE	10 ½ day CE		
14 April			16 ½ day CE		Public Holiday	18 Good Friday Public Holiday
21 April	Public Holiday				Public Holiday	21 Easter Monday Public Holiday 25 Anzac Day Public Holiday
28 April	28 ½ day CE	29 CE	30 Conf	1 Conf		Cooktown Circuit Hope Vale Circuit
		29 CE	30 CE	1 CE		
		29 CE	30 Conf	1 ½ day CE		

Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Other
5 May	Public Holiday	6 ½ day CE	7 Conf	8 ½ day CE		5 Labour Day Public Holiday
12 May	12 ½ day CE	13 CE	14 CE	15 ½ day CE		Aurukun Cape B & Coen Cape A Circuit Doomadgee Gulf Circuit
	12 ½ day CE	13 CE	14 Conf	15 Conf		
	12 ½ day CE	13 ½ day Conf 13 ½ day CE	14 Conf 14 CE	15 CE 15 Conf		
19 May	19 ½ day CE	20 Conf	21 Conf	22 ½ day CE		
		20 CE	21 CE	22 ½ day CE		
26 May	26 ½ day CE	27 CE	28 Conf	29 Conf		Cooktown Circuit
	26 CE	27 CE	28 Conf	29 CE		
		27 Conf				
2 June	2 ½ day CE	3 Conf Special Holiday – DM Only	4 Conf	5 ½ day CE		3 Mabo Day - DM
9 June	9 ½ day CE	10 CE	11 CE	12 ½ day CE		Aurukun Cape B Circuit Doomadgee Gulf Circuit
		10 CE	11 Conf	12 Conf		
		10 CE	11 Conf	12 CE		
	9 CE	10 CE	11 Conf	12 ½ day CE		
16 June	16 ½ day CE	17 Conf	18 Conf	19 ½ day CE		20-21 Mount Isa Show
23 June	23 ½ day CE	24 Conf 24 CE	25 Conf	26 Conf 26 CE	Special Holiday – CO Only	27 June Laura Rodeo, Campdraft and Races Weekend
30 June						Cooktown Circuit Hope Vale Circuit

LEGEND

	Office Days/School Holidays
	Public/Bank Holidays
	Aurukun Sitting
	Coen Sitting
	Doomadgee Sitting
	Hope Vale Sitting
	Mossman Gorge Sitting

OFFICE	CONTACT NAME	Phone	Mobile	Facsimile
Cairns – Commissioner	Tammy Williams	4081 8413	0447 739 137	4041 0974
Cairns – Deputy Commissioner	Rod Curtin	4081 8400	0419 647 948	4041 0974
Cairns – Registrar	Helen Weedon	4081 8412	0409 461 624	4041 0974
Cairns – Executive Officer (Corporate)	Wayne Massey	4081 8411	0429 495 353	4041 0974
Cairns – Manager (Compliance and Policy) (Tue, Wed, Thu morning)	Camille Banks	4081 8407	0400 355 040	4041 0974
Cairns – Manager (Case Management and Monitoring)	Anne Crampton	4081 8414	0458 041 191	4041 0974
Cairns – Senior Advisor (Statistics and Research)	Michelle Synott	4081 8404		4041 0974
Cairns – ICT Administrator	Mark Doktor	4081 8406	0427 954 870	4041 0974
Cairns – Manager (Coordination)	Sandi Rye	4081 8410	0438 195 342	4041 0974
Aurukun Local Registry Coordinator	Cara Marks	4060 6185	0428 985 106	4041 0974
Coen Local Registry Coordinator	Linda Saunders	4081 8410	0477 621 580	4041 0974
Doomadgee Local Registry Coordinator	Brenden Joinbee	4745 8111	0418 666 204	4041 0974
Hope Vale Local Registry Coordinator	Kate Gooding	4060 9153	0408 482 026	4041 0974
Mossman Gorge Local Registry Coordinator	Willy Smith	4081 8410	0417 798 392	4041 0974