

QCPCI Townsville regional visit

21 September 2012

The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry will visit Townsville next week as part of its regional hearings to ensure that local voices are heard.

In Townsville the Commission will meet with representatives of relevant government and non-government organisations to gain an insight into child protection issues in Townsville and surrounding areas.

A public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday 26 September in the Townsville District Court on Walker Street, Townsville.

The hearing will focus on child safety services in the local area, and will call on government witnesses to provide information. Anyone is welcome to attend the hearing, which will also be live streamed through the Commission's website.

On Monday 24 September Commissioner Carmody will hold a focus group with non-government organisations that are involved in child protection, and on Tuesday he will also hold focus groups to discuss children transitioning from care and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child protection system. These focus groups are designed to allow the Commissioner to hear from workers on the ground about what is needed to improve the system.

On Thursday 27 September Commissioner Carmody will visit Palm Island to meet with Mayor Alf Lacey and discuss local child protection issues. He will also meet with legal representatives who work with child protection issues in the Townsville region, and on Friday the Commissioner will meet with the Family Inclusion Network.

The Commission continues to seek public submissions from those who have had experience with the child protection system. This includes people who have worked in child protection, as well as those who have had contact with the system.

A public information session will be held from 11 am to 1 pm on Wednesday 26 September, in the conference room on Level C of the Townsville District Court. This session will give the public an opportunity to meet with Commission staff and receive information on how they can contribute to the Inquiry.

The Commission's terms of reference allow the Inquiry to investigate matters including the Queensland Government's response to children and families in the child protection system, the transition of children exiting the system, and the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in child protection.

"Public submissions will be an essential part of the material considered by the Inquiry," said Commissioner Carmody.

"I'm interested in both good and bad experiences – we need to know what works and what doesn't," he said.

If anyone has information that could assist the Inquiry an online form can be accessed on the Commission's website. This is the preferred and most secure way of making a submission.

More information about making a submission is available at www.childprotectioninquiry.qld.gov.au/submissions. Further to this, an explanatory video can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eijah3NyZVU&feature=youtu.be>

The first round of submissions will close on September 28 2012, and a second round of submissions will be accepted in December and January.

ENDS

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<http://www.childprotectioninquiry.qld.gov.au/>

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Media note: Commissioner Carmody will permit a pool camera to film opening remarks and submissions from counsel assisting for television broadcast, as well as still cameras. Please contact the Media Manager on 0477 348 296 to discuss arrangements.

Audio will be recorded and distributed for radio broadcast. If you would like to receive a copy of this, please contact the Media Manager to be added to the distribution list.