

QCPCI Cairns regional visit

7 September 2012

The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry will visit Cairns next week as part of a regional road show that will provide an opportunity for the Commission to meet with local people about local issues.

In Cairns the Commission will hear from representatives of relevant government and non-government organisations, with Indigenous over-representation a particular focus.

Public hearings are scheduled for Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 September in the Cairns District Court on Sheridan Street, Cairns.

The hearings will focus on service delivery issues in the local area by speaking to a range of government based witnesses. Anyone is welcome to attend these hearings, which will also be live streamed through the Commission's website.

On Monday 10 September Commissioner Carmody will attend the Gordonvale campus of the Djarragun College, which is an independent college that caters specifically for Indigenous students. He will also visit a residential care facility to see how children live in out-of-home care. Both of these site visits will allow the Commissioner to see first-hand some of the experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in the child protection system.

On Thursday 13 September Commissioner Carmody will consult local lawyers who work with families in the child protection system.

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 hour will be held on both hearing days between 2 pm and 3 pm in the Mangrove and Pandanus Room, Ground Floor, 5B Sheridan Street. This information session will give the public an opportunity to meet with Commission staff and receive information on how they can contribute to the Commission.

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.

ENDS

Media Contact: 3405 9783 or 3405 9785

<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.

Due to the media sensitivities around children in care, media are not permitted to attend the site visits of the Indigenous school or the residential care facility. However, images may be provided from the school visit if requested.