

QUEENSLAND CHILD PROTECTION
COMMISSION OF INQUIRYDate: 24.10.2012Exhibit number: 98

STATEMENT OF PAUL JAMES ELLIOT

I, **Paul James Elliot**, of c/- Rockhampton Police Station, Bolsover Street, Rockhampton in the State of Queensland, Officer in Charge, Rockhampton District Child Protection and Investigation Unit, solemnly and sincerely affirm and declare:

1. I am a Detective Senior Sergeant of Police performing duties as the Officer in Charge (OIC) of Rockhampton District Child Protection and Investigation Unit (CPIU), with the Queensland Police Service (QPS). I was appointed to this position on 12 May 2008.
2. Prior to this appointment I was appointed as a Senior Investigator (Detective Sergeant) within the Rockhampton Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) and held that position for a period of over 2 years being appointed to that position on 6 March 2006. During this time I relieved as Officer in Charge (Detective Acting Senior Sergeant) of Rockhampton CPIU for a period of some 3 ½ months.
3. Between September 2000 and March 2006 I performed duties as Detective Senior Constable attached to Bundaberg CIB and relieved as Officer in Charge (Acting Detective Sergeant) in Bundaberg Juvenile Aid Bureau (JAB) for a period of some 3 months in total.
4. Preceding this period, I performed duties in General Duties attached to Bundaberg Police Station from May 1996 until September 2000. During this period I performed duties in relief capacities working in small stations and sections within the Bundaberg District. These areas were Monto Station, Childers Station, Gin Gin Station, Bargara Station, Bundaberg CIB and Bundaberg JAB.
5. After being sworn in to the Queensland Police Service as a Constable of Police on 12 December 1992 my initial transfer was to Mount Isa Station where I completed my initial year of service. Following this I performed rotational transfers of 6 months duration in Doomadgee, Mount Isa Inquiry Office and Karumba Station where I was appointed Officer in Charge (Acting Sergeant) for a period of 3 months.
6. I have almost 20 years policing experience, 12 of which have been in the investigative field of policing predominantly performing CIB duties and more recently as Officer in

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Charge duties. I have worked in rural and remote areas with diverse and culturally significant demographics as well as more centralised areas such as Mount Isa, Bundaberg and Rockhampton.

7. In my role as the OIC, Rockhampton District CPIU I am required to lead, manage and supervise investigations in the child protection and youth justice fields of policing. I am also required to manage proactive activities for crime prevention in efforts to reduce the reported rate of crime within the Rockhampton District. I am also responsible for the ongoing management and control of human resources under my control.
8. When planning and reviewing my work and seeking approval for decisions, when required, I report to the Rockhampton District Support Inspector who is based in Rockhampton District Office. My position is part of the Support Services portfolio within the Rockhampton District. Inspector Darren Somerville is the appointed Support Services Inspector and Superintendent Ronald Van Saane is the District Officer, Rockhampton.
9. I am constantly 'on call' and receive an allowance to be on call when not performing official duties. This allows me to be briefed and provide timely advice to investigators when issues arise ensuring that investigations of any nature are attended to, to a satisfactory standard. This also allows for a 24 hour response to matters which may arise when the work unit is not staffed and allows prioritisation of the safety of children over any competing requests for assistance.
10. I am currently acting in the capacity of Detective Inspector, Regional Crime Coordinator for the Central Police Region and have been performing this role since 11 June 2012.

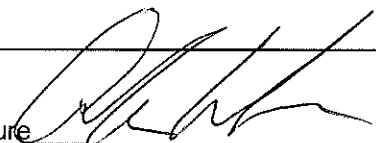
Rockhampton Police District

11. Rockhampton Police District has a population of approximately 138,725 permanent residents. 38,422 of these residents are aged 18 years or under. Additional to this is a large transient population of 'fly in, fly out' workers employed primarily in the mining industry. The Police District has 19 different police divisions namely Anakie, Blackwater, Capella, Duaringa, Emerald, Emu Park, Gracemere, Lakes Creek, Marlborough, Marmor, Mount Morgan, Rolleston, Springsure, Tieri, Westwood, Woorabinda, Yeppoon, Rockhampton and North Rockhampton. The total area of the Rockhampton Police District is 75,090 square kilometres and is serviced by 326 police officers.

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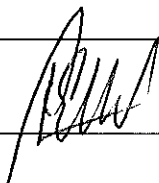
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12. The majority of the population (as evidenced by Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2011 Census figures) are concentrated in the coastal areas of Gracemere, Rockhampton, North Rockhampton, Yeppoon and Emu Park.
13. From my experiences, over the past several years Rockhampton District has seen a significant increase in the volume of property related crime. Unlawful entry offences (burglary and enter with intent), unlawful use of motor vehicles and unlawful entry of motor vehicles have increased significantly with the offenders predominantly being juveniles. A significant proportion of young offenders are of indigenous heritage and are constantly having action taken against them in relation to crimes committed. Coincidentally, P200 (previous Queensland Government Project 200) listed 16 young recidivist offenders as having come from Rockhampton, 8% of the states highest 200 young offenders. Further reference to this project is made in paragraphs 55 - 57 of this affidavit.
14. A significant amount of property related crime committed by young people can be attributed to substance abuse including alcohol, paint and glue sniffing and committing crimes to support their individual habits. For example, I have experienced instances where increase of unlawful entry offences have been committed by juvenile offenders with hardware shops targeted to steal volatile substances (glue or paint) and liquor outlets are targeted to steal large amounts of alcohol.
15. A large proportion of the young offenders within Rockhampton have had contact with Child Safety. From my experience child protection concerns relevant to these young offenders include poor supervision, homelessness, domestic violence, alcohol and substance abuse/misuse, neglect, poor parenting and lack of proper supervision. This appears commonplace in the lives of young offenders.

Residential Care Facilities

16. I am aware that the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry has previously heard evidence in relation to the placement of children in residential care. Rockhampton District has 10 residential care facilities situated at Rockhampton, Gracemere and Yeppoon. I am also aware that Child Safety have certain contractual arrangements with other service providers within Rockhampton. Residential care providers include Keppell Community

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care, Integrated Family Youth Services, Life Without Barriers, Anglicare, and On Track Yeppoon. Residential care facilities within Rockhampton appear to have the same issues as reported. A high proportion of calls for service from residential care facilities are received and responded to by police in Rockhampton. Issues particular to these calls for service include missing persons, assaults against carers, disturbances relating to substance affected juveniles, sexual assaults, attempted suicide and on several occasions arson of the residential care facility. Police are frequently called to addresses in relation to occupants who are adversely affected by paint or glue or in some instances, occupants flee the care facility as the carers have no capacity to secure the dwelling whilst they are sleeping.

17. From my experiences, the children who occupy the residential care have no discipline, refuse to cooperate with carers due to the home environment from which they were initially removed. Upon leaving the care facility there is no supervision, which exposes the child to a risk of significant harm. Upon being advised of a young person missing from a residential care facility Rockhampton police commit a significant amount of resources in locating the missing person and returning them to a safe place. It is not uncommon for the same individual to be reported as a missing person shortly after returning the child to safe care.
18. A perusal of the Rockhampton District Incident Management System indicates that Rockhampton Police have attended to calls for service on over 211 occasions since 1 January 2012 (as at 8 October 2012). These figures relate to residential care facilities in Rockhampton only which amount to seven care facilities.

Rockhampton District CPIU

19. Within the Rockhampton District there are two designated CPIU work units. The Rockhampton District CPIU is located within the Rockhampton Police District headquarters and the Woorabinda CPIU is located in the indigenous community of Woorabinda.
20. The Rockhampton District CPIU has an approved strength of 19 officers. This unit comprises the Officer in Charge, 4 Detective Sergeants (Senior Investigators), 12 investigators and 2 School Based Police Officers. When all positions are occupied there are 3 officers assigned to a District Property Team with the remainder attending to child

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protection and general criminal investigations. There is 1 Senior Investigator permanently assigned to Australian National Child Offender Register (ANCOR) duties and other investigators attached to Rockhampton CPIU attend to ANCOR duties when available. Each Senior Investigator is responsible for supervising several investigators in a team environment.

21. The Rockhampton District CPIU provides a specialist policing response to all Divisions within the District. Satellite CIB offices regularly attend to child protection investigations as part of their core duties. Divisional CIB Offices are located within the Divisions of Emerald (3 investigators), Blackwater (2 investigators) and Yeppoon (3 investigators). Each CIB office has an appointed Officer in Charge at the rank of Detective Sergeant and all investigators are at the rank of Detective Senior Constable.
22. The Woorabinda CPIU has an approved strength of 2 officers. Woorabinda CPIU was established in March 2008 and has since been upgraded to its current staffing model of 2 investigators. The Officer in Charge is an appointed Detective Sergeant and the remaining investigator is of Plain Clothes Senior Constable rank. The supervising commissioned officer responsible for Woorabinda CPIU holds the Country Portfolio from within the Rockhampton District. This work unit operates independently of the Rockhampton CPIU.
23. Rockhampton CPIU staff assist with investigations in the Woorabinda community when the need arises. Investigations relating to both child protection and juvenile justice are conducted by this work unit with assistance from Rockhampton CPIU or Blackwater CIB in the event of major investigations requiring additional assistance.
24. The responsibilities of CPIU investigators have increased significantly over the years. The responsibilities of CPIU officers can include child protection investigations, investigations into historical sex offences, youth justice investigations, management of the reportable sex offender database and the associated monitoring and compliance of reportable offenders, all investigations into deaths of children, investigating child exploitation offences and offences of a technological nature, attendance at Youth Justice Conferences, providing education awareness to a vast array of stakeholders, and general criminal investigations.

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25. Rockhampton CPIU, Woorabinda CPIU and Yeppoon CIB have what is termed as 'home look alike rooms'. These are small interview rooms where interviews of child victims take place. Other CIB offices do not have these interview rooms and generally interviews with child victims take place in the normal interview room. Home look alike rooms are fitted with recording equipment to record the Interviewing Children and Recording Evidence (ICARE) interview with the victim child.

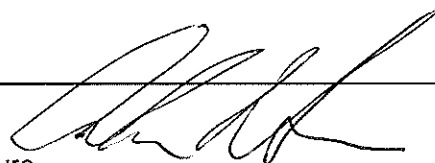
Training

26. Once appointed to a full time position within Rockhampton CPIU officers are required to register with the Detective Training Program aimed at developing their individual investigative skills. The program generally spans over 3 years and during this time, assessment and 'phases' of training are completed in accordance with set criteria. There are 3 phases associated with the Detective Training Program and during each phase, assessment items are submitted. Once marked as competent the officer can then progress to the next phase of training. Once all phases are completed and marked competent the officer can then apply to obtain their detective classification appointment. The average time for an officer to attend and complete all aspects of this training can be between 3 and 4 years.
27. CPIU Officers are also provided specialist training in the investigation of child protection (including child abuse and sex offences), ICARE, youth justice investigations. Newly appointed plain clothes investigators attend a CPIU workshop of two weeks duration. There are also other training courses on offer which assists the development and overall effectiveness of the plain clothes investigator. These courses include various Competency Acquisition Program (CAP) units which focus on relevant investigation issues, Child Protection Offender Reporting Workshop, Investigative Interviewing, various technological courses focussing on the forensic examination of computers and mobile telephones and Constable Development Program.
28. Compulsory training is also conducted by all members of Rockhampton CPIU. These forms of training can be skill competency (Firearms, Operational Skills and Tactics) and up-skilling due to changes to legislation, policy and procedures.

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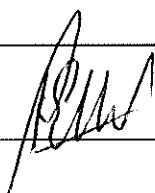
29. Developmental opportunities exist from time to time for police attached to General Duties to relieve within the Rockhampton CPIU. The experiences gained by these relieving opportunities are valuable for when they return to their substantive positions.
30. First Year Constables (FYC) also rotate through the Rockhampton CPIU. This rotation is for one month's duration and during this time the FYC is given exposure to the workings of a CPIU office. This gives the FYC a small understanding of the processes involved within the CPIU office.
31. In order to qualify for progression to a higher rank, the Management Development Program is a pre-requisite for promotion.

Reportable Child Sex Offenders

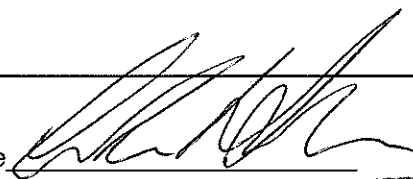
32. The management and coordination of monitoring compliance of Reportable Child Sex Offenders in the Rockhampton District is the responsibility of the Rockhampton CPIU. Generally, assistance will be sought from divisional CIB's with compliance related matters. By having outside assistance from divisional CIB's allows for travel time to be reduced and spreads the workload lessening the actual impost on investigators attached to Rockhampton CPIU.
33. Rockhampton District has a number of Reportable Offenders within the District. Reportable offenders are classified as to their level of risk as either a Very High, High, Medium or Low level of risk. There is also scope to nominate suspected sex offenders as a person of Interest (POI). The amount of reportable offenders within the Rockhampton District is increasing at a rate not experienced previously. This increase is consuming a large proportion of investigators time not only with the compliance monitoring but for small changes required to be reported of a Reportable Offender's status.
34. Coupled with the administrative component associated with Reportable Offender management, the overall management of Reportable Offenders consumes considerable amounts of time and creates pressure on individual investigators when prioritising investigations.

Child Safety Service Centres

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35. There are 3 Child Safety Service Centres (CSSC) within the Rockhampton District. These Service Centres are located at Rockhampton North, Rockhampton South and Emerald. Child Safety provides a lead agency response within the Rockhampton District through these Service Centres. The majority of contact with Rockhampton CPIU is with Rockhampton North and Rockhampton South Child Safety Service Centres. Emerald Child Safety Service Centre is predominantly serviced by Emerald, Blackwater and Longreach CIB.

Paediatrician

36. Rockhampton District currently has two full time paediatricians who has the ability to perform examinations of victim children. Rockhampton CPIU have established a highly professional working relationship with the local paediatrician and the local Child Protection Liaison Officer from Queensland Health. Until recently, 3 paediatricians performed duty in Rockhampton however the senior paediatrician has recently retired to take up part time employment. I am not aware of any service delivery issues relating to paediatric services in Rockhampton.
37. In the instances that examinations of victim children are required processes have been developed whereby an appointment is made and the victim child presented to the paediatrician for the examination to be performed. Outlying areas coordinate the appointments with Child Safety or present the victim child to the paediatrician as required.

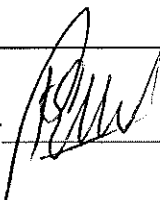
Central Queensland Regional Intake Service

38. The Central Queensland Regional Intake Service (CQRIS) is based in Hervey Bay and is responsible for the intake and assessment of all Child Protection Notifications received relevant to the Rockhampton District. CQRIS forward Child Protection Notifications to the Rockhampton CPIU via facsimile or email.

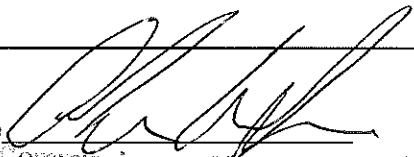
Notifications

39. Child Protection Notifications (CPN) are reported to Rockhampton CPIU by various means. Internal police reporting systems such as the Queensland Police Records and

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Information Management Exchange (QPRIME) enable investigations to commence once reported. Notifications are also received from various notifiers such as Education Queensland, Catholic Education, Queensland Health, Child Safety/CQRIS, the public, police and other policing jurisdictions (interstate law enforcement departments).

40. Upon receipt of the notification at Rockhampton CPIU the details are recorded on a database which is used to measure volume and record details. This is prior to being entered onto the QPRIME system which is carried out by an investigator assigned the notification. The investigation is then managed through QPRIME.
41. A perusal of the Rockhampton CPIU notification database indicates that the volume of notifications has remained constant with the following amounts being recorded. It should be noted that notifications recorded are actual notifications as opposed to the numbers of children per notification. Notifications received regularly have several subject children within the individual notification. Essentially, the amount of investigative time spent on individual notifications is relevant to the number of subject children and siblings appearing on the notification.
- 2010 - 446 Notifications received
 - 2011 – 455 Notifications received
 - 2012 – 323 Notifications received (as at 10 October 2012)
42. The assessment of all CPN is conducted by either the Officer in Charge or in the absence of the Officer in Charge, a Detective Sergeant rostered to perform duty. The notification is then prioritised and delegated to an appropriate investigator. A generic Rockhampton CPIU email account is also monitored by the Administrative Officer and Officer in Charge in the event notifications are received via email.

Joint Investigations

43. Since the introduction of CQRIS the volume of 'joint investigations' has reduced significantly. Previously, a notification would be received from either of the 3 Service Centres with a joint investigation request, however a large proportion of the notifications being forwarded by CQRIS now appear to be forwarded for 'advice only'. Not only is this confusing for the investigator but causes some tension between Child Safety and police as the investigation is almost always commenced, completed and finalised prior to a joint

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investigation request being forwarded from the respective CSSC. In the event that a joint investigation is commenced, Child Safety are not always in a position to respond citing other work commitments, training and insufficient staff.

Information Sharing

44. In June 2012 the information sharing policy by Child Safety was amended from disclosing notifier details to that of only disclosing notifier details in specific circumstances. I see this as a hindrance to the investigative process and detrimental to the overall notion of child protection. Quite often the notifier can be a preliminary complainant in a matter or alternatively be in a situation to provide details of harm to a child. This information can then be used by investigators to make informed decisions, gather all available evidence and act on the evidence gained. The delays experienced due to this amendment to policy has the potential for children to remain at risk for an unwarranted length of time until that information can be lawfully obtained.
45. The sharing of information pursuant to section 14(2) and sections 159M and 159N of the *Child Protection Act 1999* adequately sets out what information can be provided to stakeholders within the child protection system.

Partnerships

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN)

46. The Rockhampton District SCAN Representative is a Detective Senior Sergeant who is housed within the Rockhampton CPIU office. This position is responsible for not only Rockhampton District but that of Gladstone and Longreach Police Districts. The SCAN Representative is a core member of the SCAN teams which cover all of the mentioned areas. Core agencies within the SCAN team are Child Safety Services, Queensland Police, Education Queensland, Queensland Health and the Recognised Entity. Certain stakeholders are invited to attend SCAN meetings to provide their expert opinion or involvement in a particular case.
47. The Rockhampton SCAN Representative also overviews all 'emotional' abuse child protection occurrences (children involved in domestic violence situations) and provides notification to CQRIS and sources information to value add to any particular occurrence. The workload for the Rockhampton SCAN Representative is very high. For example,

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between 1 July and 8 October 2012 the Rockhampton SCAN Coordinator has personally overviewed the following:

- 349 emotional abuse reports for Rockhampton District
- 87 emotional abuse reports for Gladstone District
- 14 emotional abuse reports for Longreach District.

48. Of these reports, for the same period (1 July – 8 October 2012) there have been a total of 31 referrals to SCAN with 17 of these referrals remaining open as at 8 October 2012. Of the mentioned referrals a large majority of these are referrals from Police. In consultation with Rockhampton SCAN Representative, approximately 70% of these referrals are from QPS.
49. The Rockhampton SCAN Representative is also supported by a part time administrative officer who performs duty for 2 days per week.
50. There are currently 4 SCAN teams serviced by the Rockhampton SCAN Representative, these being Rockhampton North, Rockhampton South, Emerald and Gladstone. Each meeting discusses on average 4 cases per meeting. At present SCAN meetings are conducted on a weekly basis with Rockhampton North and Emerald on the first week and then Rockhampton South and Gladstone on the second week. The meetings are then repeated in the following 2 weeks which results in each SCAN team meeting fortnightly. I have been made aware that recent discussion has occurred by members of Child Safety with a proposal to change the regularity of SCAN meetings from weekly to that of fortnightly. This, in effect would mean that each SCAN meeting is held on a monthly basis as opposed to fortnightly. If monthly meetings were implemented locally, the likelihood of having to conduct emergency SCAN meetings would be increased. The logistics of organising an emergency SCAN meeting is complicated by the fact that not all core members can be in a position to immediately respond due to time, distance and other factors limiting their response. I, in consultation with the Rockhampton SCAN Coordinator consider that this proposal comes with certain risks which are indicated below:
- There will be lengthy delays in cases being tabled at SCAN.
51. A matter cannot be tabled at SCAN unless it is already a case with Child Safety or is being assessed by CQRIS as a notification. There are already lengthy delays in receiving

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formal responses from CQRIS. These can be up to one month but generally at least 2 weeks. If meetings were to be held monthly, it could possibly take between 1 and 2 months before a matter is formally tabled and discussed at SCAN. It is the view that by reducing the functionality of SCAN is not in the best interests of the children the SCAN system is attempting to protect. This will impact on the purpose of SCAN referenced to in Section 3.1 of the SCAN team system manual. The information sharing will not be timely and the coordination and response to the protective needs of the children will also be delayed.

- This proposal is in conflict with SCAN Team System manual and the overall purpose of SCAN.

52. The current SCAN Team policy and scan team system manual at section 3.7 states that *'the SCAN team coordinator ensures the matter listed on the SCAN team meeting agenda for discussion within ten business days of receipt of the SCAN team referral'*.
53. Advice received from the Rockhampton SCAN Representative (QPS) is that this proposal seems to be prompted by the removal of the full time SCAN Coordinator position (CSS). Whilst it would not have any impact on the QPS SCAN representative's role it is strongly believed that this is not in line with current policy or the purpose of SCAN (to enable a coordinated response to the protection needs of children – s159J of the *Child Protection Act 1999*) and it will be the children suffering abuse that will not benefit from the prompt multiagency discussions and responding to the protection needs of children.
54. Public perceptions regarding the incidence of crime continue to pose a challenge for police. The Rockhampton CPIU met that challenge by adopting a whole of Government approach to this issue and enhancing partnerships with key agencies. These agencies continue to address and constantly reassess the issue of offending by young people and the related child protection issues.

Case Management Panel

55. In October 2010 following the identified increase in the volume of property related offences committed primarily by juvenile offenders within the Rockhampton District discussions were had with key stakeholders in the child protection and juvenile justice systems. As a consequence a whole of government approach to the issue commences

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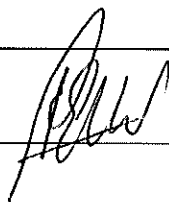
with the case management of identified recidivist offenders. The panel of members consists of representatives from Queensland Police Service, Department of Communities, Youth Justice, Child and Youth Mental Health, Department of Education, Justice and Attorney-General and Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs as core group members. Underlying causes of juvenile offending are examined as well as addressing any child protection issues.

56. The aim of the case management team is to individually manage offending juveniles, provide them with avenues of support and education and attempt to develop their individual skills and coping mechanisms. Monitoring and deterring young offenders from offending patterns of behaviours formed part of the strategies.
57. The case management of the identified young people could be consistently maintained as the actual number of recidivist offenders was small in number (see paragraph 13). This strategy had some success and meetings continue to occur. I have recently been informed that the case management panel is currently under review as to if it should continue.

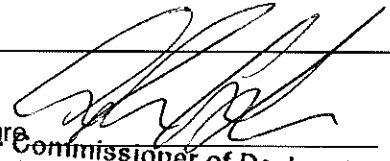
Early Intervention Panel

58. As a follow on to the case management panel, discussions were had with representatives from Youth Justice and as a consequence, an early intervention panel was formed. The target audience was young persons at risk of entering the statutory justice system but had not yet come to the attention of Youth Justice. It is widely recognised that police generally have contact with young people and young offenders at a much earlier stage prior to any further governmental agency involvement. The cautioning process for juvenile offenders is an example of where at risk children can be referred for early intervention.
59. An example of the successes of this program is when representatives from the early intervention panel discuss the benefits of this strategy with the child's parents, in efforts to obtain referral consent to the program and on each occasion the parent was motivated and pleased with the approaches made therefore providing consent.
60. Since commencing full time duties as Officer in Charge of Rockhampton CPIU I have endeavoured to build relationships with all stakeholders involved in the child protection

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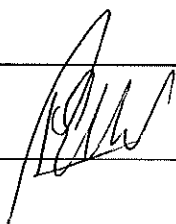


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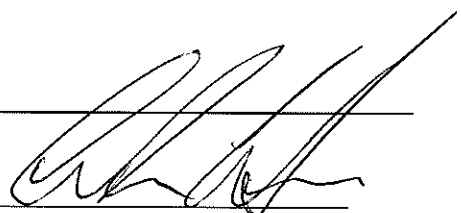
system. To complement this I endeavour to attend key stakeholder group meetings, maintain open lines of communication and meet with Child Safety management as regularly as possible. As a consequence, I consider that a solid working relationship has been fostered which in turn enhances the overall effectiveness of performing child protection related functions within the Rockhampton District

Declared before me at Rockhampton this 11th day of October 2012.

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