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**CHILD SAFETY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
STATE OF QUEENSLAND
PROACTIVE STATEMENT NO.6**

STATEMENT OF CORINNE PORTA

I, **Corinne Porta**, of care of Crown Law, Level 11, 50 Ann Street, Brisbane, a Social Worker, in the State of Queensland state as follows:

1. I am the Regional Director, Far North Queensland, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the Department). I have been employed by the Department since 1999.
2. My qualification is a Bachelor of Social Work degree, which was conferred in 2000.
3. As Regional Director, I am responsible for the strategic leadership, management, and service delivery oversight of Child Safety Service Centres in the Far North Queensland Region. This involves ensuring operational child safety service delivery alignment with government policy, legislation, practice and strategic priorities. A copy of the Far North Queensland Region organisational chart is attached. (Annexure 1)
4. I do not have the direct responsibility for the development of the departmental policies or practice guidelines.
5. Departmental practice and decision making is guided by the departmentally approved policies, procedures and practice guides contained in the Child Safety Practice Manual (CSPM). I am aware the CSPM has been provided in response to Notice to Produce (NTP) 1.

Far North Queensland Region

6. The Far North Queensland Region (the Region) is one of six regions in the state of Queensland. The area of coverage for the Region is north to the outer islands of the Torres Strait, south to Cardwell and west to Croydon. A copy of the Far North Queensland Regional Map is attached (Annexure 2).
7. The Region covers 272,000 square kilometres, which is 15.8% of the Queensland land area.

8. As at June 2023, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 17.3% of the Region's population, significantly higher than the 4.6% across Queensland. 27.8% of children and young people aged 0 to 17 years in the Region identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is compared to 9.4% across Queensland.
9. Ensuring culturally appropriate practice across service delivery is critical in the Region, given it is inclusive of 13 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander discrete communities:
 - a) Torres Strait Islands (including Thursday Island);
 - b) Northern Peninsula Area;
 - c) Mapoon;
 - d) Napranum;
 - e) Aurukun;
 - f) Lockhart River;
 - g) Coen;
 - h) Pormpuraaw;
 - i) Kowanyama;
 - j) Hope Vale;
 - k) Wujal Wujal;
 - l) Mossman Gorge; and
 - m) Yarrabah.
10. It is an ongoing responsibility to understand and learn about the cultural practices and protocols unique to each community within the Region, given the variations between communities. Practices such as Sorry Business, Sad News, Women's Business and Men's Business are observed differently, requiring guidance to ensure the Region's engagement and service delivery are conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner. These cultural practices may also impact timeframes for service delivery.
11. The Region collaborates with other Government organisations in remote communities to respond to emergent matters that service delivery impacts delay Departmental officers capacity. These organisations are usually the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health.

12. As at 2021, 33.9% of the region's population were in the most disadvantaged quintile, of the index of relative socio-economic disadvantage. This index ranks areas in terms of their relative socio-economic disadvantage and focuses on low-income earners, relatively lower education attainment, high unemployment, and dwelling without motor vehicles.

Far North Queensland Child Safety Service Delivery

13. There are six Child Safety Service Centres in the Region:
- a. Edmonton;
 - b. Innisfail;
 - c. Cairns;
 - d. Atherton;
 - e. North Cairns and Lower Cape; and
 - f. Cape York North and Torres Strait Islands.
14. There are four hub offices located in:
- a. Cooktown;
 - b. Weipa;
 - c. Thursday Island; and
 - d. Mareeba.
15. The six Child Safety Service Centres deliver Assessment and Ongoing Intervention, while the four hub models provide various phases of child protection intervention. These hubs are specifically designed to address the unique service delivery needs of the communities and families in their respective areas.
- a). The hub office located in Cooktown provides ongoing intervention to children and families in the Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale discrete communities, as well as other small rural towns in the greater area.
 - b). The hub office located in Weipa provides ongoing intervention to children and families in Weipa and the remote discrete communities of Aurukun, Napranum, Mapoon and Lockhart River.
 - c). The hub office on Thursday Island provides services across the child protection continuum to the 17 inhabited islands of the Torres Strait as well as the five landlocked communities of the Northern Peninsula Area.

- d). The hub office located in Mareeba provides ongoing intervention to children and families from Kuranda to Mareeba.
16. Regional units and programs support the delivery of services across the Region. These include:
- a) Far North Queensland Assessment Team. This team undertakes Assessments, following the recording of a Notification, to determine if a child is in need of protection and identifies the appropriate level of intervention where required.
 - i) All assessments for children and families in the Eastern and Western Cape are performed by staff from the Assessment Service Centre on an as needed basis.
 - b) The Placement Services Unit identifies and supports safe, suitable and culturally appropriate placements., including foster care, kinship care, residential care, or other specific models of care and support.
 - c) The Kin Placement Team works in collaboration with the Assessment Team to identify and emergently assess kin for children at risk of entering out-of-home care. The team also prioritise exploration and assessment of kin for children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care, specifically residential care.
 - d) The Regional Services Centre provides oversight and governance of the High Intensity Team, the Collaborative Family Decision Making Team and the Regional Intake Team:
 - i) The High Intensity Team work with 30 of the region’s children with complex needs, who require an intensive case management approach. The presenting needs of this cohort include young people with dual child protection and youth justice orders, young people engaging in high-risk behaviours such as self-placing or refusing to remain in approved placements, young people presenting with poor mental health, or those engaging in drug or alcohol misuse, problematic sexual behaviours or criminal offending.
 - ii) The Collaborative Family Decision Making Team facilitates family group meetings in accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act); ensuring that these meetings provide family-based responses to children’s protection and care needs, and to ensure there is an inclusive process of case planning and decision making.
 - iii) Regional Intake Service receives and assesses information about child protection concerns from notifiers and determines levels of response, including referrals to secondary services, or pathways through to Assessment.

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- e) The Region’s Practice Team which consists of:
 - (i) Director, Quality Practice;
 - (ii) One Regional Practice Leader;
 - (iii) One Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader;
 - (iv) One Transition Officer;
 - (v) Two Specialist Service Clinicians;
 - (vi) One Specialist Health Liaison Position;
 - (vii) One Domestic and Family Violence Child Protection Practitioner; and
 - (viii) One Senior Service Support Officer.
 - f) Investment and Partnership Contracting and Community Partnerships Team are responsible for regional procurement of outsourced service delivery contracts and the management of these contracts.
 - g) The Office of the Regional Executive Director which supports the region by providing guidance on strategic, operational, and corporate governance matters. It ensures that systems, policies, and practices are in place to uphold the region's governance and performance. The office is responsible for coordinating executive support and correspondence, managing complaints, overseeing human resources, financial management, property services, and handling performance data and reporting across the region.
17. The region encompasses vast and remote areas and isolated communities. This can hinder timely service delivery due to travel, limited infrastructure and weather-related disruptions, such as wet season flooding or cyclones. Ensuring all areas within the Region receive equitable attention and resources is challenging given the geographical spread.
- a) Access to the 17 islands requires staff to travel via charter plane, helicopter, or boat, with boat services limited to smaller islands in close proximity to Thursday Island. Outer islands can only be accessed by plane if the island has a landing strip. Otherwise, travel must be conducted via helicopter. All flights are arranged in accordance with the Aerial Services Brokerage agreements to ensure compliance with Aviation Legislative requirements. Travel to the outer islands occurs on a weekly or fortnightly basis, depending on operational needs, with flight durations typically being no longer than one hour.
 - b) Travel from Cairns to Aurukun is conducted on a fortnightly basis, while travel to Lockhart River occurs once per month. Both communities are accessible by road for only six months of the year. The journey to these communities

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involves travel on unsealed dirt roads, with an approximate one-way driving time of three hours to Aurukun and four to five hours to Lockhart River. During the remaining six months of the year, when road access is unavailable, staff are required to travel to both communities via chartered small aircraft.

- c) Travel from Cairns to the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) is conducted by ferry, with the journey taking approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. The ferry operates on a limited schedule, departing once a day on specific days of the week. Timetables are subject to seasonal variations and weather conditions, particularly during the monsoon season, which runs from October to May. Staff travelling from Thursday Island to the NPA typically stay for periods ranging from three to five weeks, residing in commercial accommodation.
- d) The communities of Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, and Coen are serviced by staff based in Cairns on a fly-in, fly-out basis. Access to Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw is provided fortnightly via commercial airlines, while visits to Coen are conducted monthly using chartered aircraft. On occasion, staff may be required to transport replacement vehicles to these communities by road. These road journeys primarily involve travel on unsealed dirt roads and typically take between 8 to 11 hours to complete.

Far North Queensland Region Child Safety staffing and budget establishment

- 18. For the financial year 2024 – 2025, the Region had an operating budget of \$119 million. This includes, Employee Expenses, Supplies and Services, Service Procurement and Grants and Subsidies.
- 19. The total spend on staff travel to service remote and discreet communities for the 2024-25 financial year was \$922,092. This is inclusive of \$250,000 for accommodation, \$245,000 in commercial airfares, \$208,000 in charter flights and \$184,000 in travel allowances for staff.
- 20. For the financial year 2024 – 2025, the Region was funded to employ a total of 356 full-time equivalent staff, within the regional service centres, hubs and teams as outlined above. This is inclusive of 136.9 front line, Child Safety Officer positions.
- 21. As at 27 June 2025, the Region had 313.13 active paid FTE, within the regional service centres, hubs and teams as outlined above. This is inclusive of 112.18 Child Safety Officer (including Senior CSO) active paid FTE.
- 22. The region continues to face challenges in recruiting front-line workers, particularly Child Safety Officers. Many applicants are required to relocate to the Region, often moving away from their support networks and families to accept these positions. Additionally, a significant proportion of applicants hold visas, which can affect their capacity to remain employed in the region on a long-term basis.

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23. Staff often transition from front-line positions within the department to roles in other government or non-government sectors. This is influenced by factors such as access to enhanced employment benefits, including more favourable salary sacrifice options, a desire to achieve improved work-life balance, and the opportunity to manage smaller caseloads.
24. All staff located in remote locations are eligible to receive financial incentives. These incentives vary depending on the staff members work location. Incentives include a fortnightly locality allowance, an annual return airfare, and annual incentive payments. Annual incentive payments are as follows:
 - a). Thursday Island \$10,000
 - b). Weipa \$10,000
 - c). Cooktown \$7,500
 - d). Atherton \$5,000
 - e). Mareeba \$5,000
 - f). Cairns, Edmonton and Innisfail \$2,500.
26. In addition, staff in Thursday Island, Weipa and Cooktown receive:
 - a). An additional five days of recreational leave per year;
 - b). Five days isolated centre concessional leave;
 - c). Return airfares to designated major coast centres;
 - d). Return airfares to Brisbane; and
 - e). Access to government employee housing at significantly reduced rental rates.

Far North Queensland service delivery data – Intake

25. For the 12-month period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, the region received a total of 9,900 Intakes, reported through the Regional Intake Service. This total is inclusive of 5,010 Intakes that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - a) Of the 9,900 Intakes recorded, 7,634 were finalised with a Child Concern Report outcome and 2,266 were finalised as Child Protection Notifications.
26. Intake reports to the Far North Regional Intake Service over the previous four years are detailed as follows:

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- a) For the 12-month period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the Region received a total of 10,951 Intakes. This total is inclusive of 5,395 Intakes that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - (i) Of the 10,951 Intakes recorded, 8,928 were finalised with a Child Concern Report outcome; and 2,023 were finalised as Child Protection Notifications.
- b) For the 12-month period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, the Region received a total of 8,886 Intakes. This total is inclusive of 4,535 Intakes that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - (i) Of the 8,886 Intakes recorded, 6,952 were finalised with a Child Concern Report outcome; and 1,934 were finalised as Child Protection Notifications.
- c) For the 12-month period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, the Region received a total of 8,547 Intakes. This total is inclusive of 4,308 Intakes that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - (i) Of the 8,547 Intakes recorded, 6,530 were finalised with a Child Concern Report outcome; and 2,017 were finalised as Child Protection Notifications.

Far North Queensland service delivery data – Assessment

27. For the 12-month period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, the region finalised 1,478 Notifications that required Assessment. This total is inclusive of 931 Notifications requiring Assessment that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

- a) Of the 1,478 Assessments finalised:
 - (i) 503 had a substantiated harm or risk of harm outcome; 306 were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - (ii) Of the 503 substantiated harm or risk of harm outcomes, abuse types are detailed as follows:
 - a. physical abuse was the most serious harm type in 102 Assessments;
 - b. sexual abuse was the most serious harm type in 17 Assessments;
 - c. emotional abuse was the most serious harm type in 251 Assessments; and
 - d. neglect was the most serious harm type in 133 Assessments.

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28. Finalised Assessment in the region over the previous four years are detailed as follows:

- a) For the 12-month period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the region finalised 1,501 Assessments. This total is inclusive of a 978 Notifications requiring Assessment that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Of the 1,501 Assessments finalised:

- (i) 478 had a substantiated harm or risk of harm outcome; 315 were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- (ii) Of the 478 substantiated harm or risk of harm outcomes, abuse types are detailed as follows:
 - a. physical abuse was the most serious harm type in 85 Assessments;
 - b. sexual abuse was the most serious harm type in 30 Assessments;
 - c. emotional abuse was the most serious harm type in 247 Assessments; and
 - d. neglect was the most serious harm type in 116 Assessments.

- b) For the 12-month period 30 June 2022 to 30 June 2023, the region finalised 1,508 Assessments. This total is inclusive of a 962 Notifications requiring Assessment that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Of the 1,508 Assessments finalised:

- (i) 537 had a substantiated harm or risk of harm outcome; 375 were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- (ii) Of the 537 substantiated harm or risk of harm outcomes, abuse types are detailed as follows:
 - a. physical abuse was the most serious harm type in 91 Assessments;
 - b. sexual abuse was the most serious harm type in 25 Assessments;
 - c. emotional abuse was the most serious harm type in 257 Assessments; and
 - d. neglect was the most serious harm type in 164 Assessments.

- c) For the 12-month period 30 June 2021 to 30 June 2022, the region finalised 1,610 Assessments. This total is inclusive of a 1,020 Notifications requiring Assessment that were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Of the 1,610 Assessments finalised:

- (i) 580 had a substantiated harm or risk of harm outcome; 395 were specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- (ii) Of the 580 substantiated harm or risk of harm outcomes, abuse types are detailed as follows:
 - a. physical abuse was the most serious harm type in 101 Assessments;
 - b. sexual abuse was the most serious harm type in 21 Assessments;
 - c. emotional abuse was the most serious harm type in 294 Assessments; and
 - d. neglect was the most serious harm type in 164 Assessments.

Far North Queensland service delivery data – Child Protection Orders

29. As at 31 March 2025, the region had a total of 1,335 children and young people subject to Child Protection Orders. This total is inclusive of 1,040 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

The total of 1,335 children and young people subject to child protection orders can be further detailed as follows:

- a) 613 were subject to short-term child protection orders; and
- b) 722 were subject to long-term child protection orders.

30. As at 31 March 2025, the region had a total of 1,255 children and young people living in out-of-home care. This is inclusive of 957 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Approved out-of-home care arrangements for the 1,255 children and young people are detailed as follows:

- a) 577 were residing with approved kin carers;
- b) 419 were residing with approved foster carers; and
- c) 259 were residing in residential care.

Approved care arrangements for the 957 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are further detailed as follows:

- a. 432 were residing with approved kin carers;
- b. 329 were residing with approved foster carers; and


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31. 196 were residing in residential care.
32. Total number of children subject to child protection orders in the region over the previous 4 years are detailed as follows:
 - a) as at 30 June 2024, there were a total of 1,340 children subject to child protection orders; this is inclusive of a total of 1,049 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
 - b) as at 30 June 2023, there were a total of 1,401 children subject to child protection orders; this is inclusive of a total of 1,087 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; and
 - c) as at 30 June 2022, there were a total of 1,415 children subject to child protection orders; this is inclusive of a total of 1,084 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Far North Queensland service delivery data – Intervention with Parental Agreement

33. At the end of 31 March 2025, the region had a total of 172 children and young people subject to Intervention with Parental Agreement (IPA). This total is inclusive of 122 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
34. Total number of children subject to IPA in the region over the previous four years are detailed as follows:
 - a) as at 30 June 2024, there were 181 children and young people subject to IPA; this total is inclusive of 136 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people;
 - b) as at 30 June 2023, there were 205 children and young people subject to IPA; this total is inclusive of 156 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; and
 - c) as at 30 June 2022, there were 204 children and young people subject to IPA; this total is inclusive of 154 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Far North Queensland Region Outsourced Service Delivery

35. The Region has a total investment of \$82,647,721 for outsourced service delivery for the 2024 – 2025 financial year. These include out-of-home care services, support services (including tertiary and secondary services), delegated authority and transition to adulthood. These are detailed further as follows:

Child Protection Placement Services:

- a) Foster and Kinship Care Services are funded at a total of \$9,772,601.

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- b) Capability Building Services are funded at a total of \$176,523.
- c) Residential Care, Safe Houses and Supported Independent Living is funded at a total of \$34,551,571.
- d) Intensive Foster care services are funded at a total of \$1,888,041.

Child Protection Support Services:

- e) Counselling and Intervention Services, Other, and Sexual Abuse Counselling is funded at a total of \$414,418.

Families:

- f) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services, Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Services, Assessment and Service Connect, Community Support, Family and Child Connect, Family Participation Program, Intensive Family Support, Secondary Family Support, Support and Case Management, Targeted Family Support and Tertiary Family Support are funded at a total of \$27,494,906.

Delegated Authority

- g) Delegated Authority services are funded at a total of \$2,266,137.

Young People:

- h) Community Support, Information Advice and Referral, Support and Case Management, Transition to Adulthood are funded at a total of \$5,817,743.

Service System Support & Development:

- i) Systemic And Group Advocacy services are funded at a total of \$265,781.

Far North Queensland Individual Placement and Support Packages

36. As at 30 June 2025, the Region had a total of 359 children subject to Individual Placement and Support Packages, at total cost of \$86,021,528.30 for the 2024-25 financial year. This includes:

- a) 305 children subject to Placement Packages;
- b) 53 children subject to Placement Support Packages; and
- c) 32 children subject to In-Home Support Packages.

37. As at 30 June 2024, the Region had a total of 384 children subject to Individual Placement and Support Packages, at a total cost of \$64,910,055.79 for the 2023-24 financial year. This includes:

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- a) 220 children subject to Placement Packages;
- b) 79 children subject to Placement Support Packages; and
- c) 134 child subject to In-Home Support Package.

Far North Queensland Service Delivery Challenges

- 38. There is currently no outsourced, funded foster and kinship carer support agency operating in the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) and Torres regions. All support services are being provided directly by Child Safety staff, which places additional pressure on departmental resources.
- 39. The Weipa and Aurukun areas face a significant shortage of kinship and foster carers, primarily due to challenges associated with Blue Card eligibility. These challenges include prospective carers or other household members receiving negative notices or being unable to obtain a Blue Card due to the lack of government-approved identification. Additionally, severe overcrowding in discrete communities exacerbates the issue, with multiple individuals often residing in a single household. This situation is further compounded in Aurukun, where homes are frequently closed for extended periods, sometimes exceeding a year due to cultural practices such as sorry business.
- 40. Safe Houses are operational in Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, Napranum, Aurukun, and Horn Island, offering residential care options for children. However, each Safe House is limited to four beds and is only equipped to accommodate children with moderate needs. Recruitment of staff for these facilities remains an ongoing challenge, and there have been instances where Safe Houses have been temporarily closed due to insufficient staffing levels.
- 41. The NPA, Kowanyama, and Pormpuraaw experience inconsistent internet reception and limited service availability.
- 42. Staff safety challenges are present on the Torres Strait outer islands due to the unavailability of vehicles on several islands. In situations where a Police Liaison Officer is not available, staff are required to traverse the islands on foot, which poses potential safety risks.
- 43. Family Intervention and early intervention services are limited in certain communities around Weipa, with support often provided on a fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) basis. When flights are cancelled or cultural practices such as Sorry Business occurs, clients may experience extended periods without access to these services. Similarly, occupational therapy, paediatric, and other specialist supports across Cape communities are also delivered on a FIFO basis, creating challenges in providing timely and consistent support for children.


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44. The recruitment of foster carers remains an ongoing challenge in the region. There are 808 funded foster and kinship care placements in the region. As at 10 April 2025, there were 82 vacancies due to an inability of organisations to recruit.

Working for Queensland Survey

45. The Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey is an annual employee opinion survey conducted across the Queensland public sector. It is designed to gather insights from employees about their workplace experiences, including areas such as job satisfaction, organisational culture, leadership and employee engagement. The survey provides a confidential platform for employees to share their perspectives, helping to identify strengths and areas for improvement within department and agencies.
46. Key outcomes of the 2024 WfQ survey included:
- a) 81% of staff feel that they have the authority to do their jobs effectively; have choices in how they carry out their tasks; and are encouraged to take part in decisions that affect their jobs;
 - b) 81% of staff reflected that their manager/supervisor regularly discuss improvements to workgroups, communicates expectations and shows appreciation of individual contributions;
 - c) 82% of staff advised that they experience high levels of respect within their workgroups, sharing of views and diverse thoughts/perspectives;
 - d) 85% of staff report having a respectful work environment, they feel valued & heard and receive support when discussing and working through challenges; and
 - e) 78% of staff report positive experiences in relation to cultural safety of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues in their work groups.

Over-Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children

47. As at 31 March 2025, the region had 1,255 children and young people in out-of-home care. This is inclusive of 957 children that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and accounts for 76.3% of all children in out-of-home care in the Region.
- a) As at 30 June 2024, 77.6% of all children in out-of-home care in the Region identified as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander.
 - b) As at 30 June 2023, 77.1% of all children in out-of-home care in the Region identified as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander.
 - c) As at 30 June 2022, 77.5% of all children in out-of-home care in the Region identified as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander.
48. The Region has an established Cultural Capability Plan, which is actively supported by members of the FNQ Cultural Capability Implementation Group (FNQ CCIIG). The Cultural Capability Plan explicitly acknowledges the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in out-of-home care. It underscores the

critical need for improved practices, strengthened partnerships, and targeted investment to achieve better outcomes for families, children, and communities.

49. The Cultural Capability Plan is a living and evolving document designed to guide the development and enhancement of cultural humility and capability across the Region.
50. The Cultural Practice Advisors within the Region meet on a bi-monthly basis, guided by a structured work plan that prioritises the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the work. Their responsibilities include embedding the principles of Safe Care and Connection, ensuring the implementation of active efforts, facilitating opportunities to identify an Independent Person, and upholding the application of the Child Placement Principle in accordance with relevant legislative and policy frameworks.
51. The region has established some local place-based initiatives to address over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, such as:
 - a) Lockhart River Catch Up – Family Time. This initiative aims to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family connections, promote cultural understanding, and ensure accessibility and inclusivity. By collaborating with Elders, community members, and partner agencies, the program seeks to create a supportive environment for families and children; and
 - b) Cultural Threads. This initiative is being implemented in the Assessment Service Centre to build stronger relationships with Family Participation providers to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are supported to remain central in decisions that affect their children.

Delegated Authority

52. The Delegated Authority model in the Region is led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community Controlled Organisations (ATSICCO). The benefits of Delegated Authority include ATSICCO deep community ties, cultural knowledge, and strong stakeholder relationships, ATSICCOs are positioned to deliver culturally safe, family-centred, and community-driven care decisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care.
53. The Delegated Authority model in the Region is implemented through ATSICCOs. This model leverages the strengths of ATSICCOs, including their deep connections to the community, cultural expertise, and well-established relationships with stakeholders. As a result, ATSICCOs are uniquely positioned to make culturally safe, family-centred, and community-driven care decisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care.
54. Thursday Island Child Safety Hub has a Delegated Authority Operational Agreement in place with the Mura Kosker Sorority Inc to deliver services to the families of the Torres Strait. As at 12 August 2025 Mura Kosker Sorority have seven children with


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Chief Executive approval to make decisions as they relate to sections 87 and 88 (2) of the Act.

- 55. Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation (RAATSICC) has a Delegated Authority Operational Agreement in place to deliver services to the families in Kowanyama, Mossman and Pormpuraaw. As at 21 August 2025, RAATSICC have nine children with Chief Executive approval to make decisions as they relate to sections 87 and 88 (2) of the Act.
- 56. Wuchopperen, Mamu, and NPAFACS (Northern Peninsula Area Family and Community Services) are in their first year of funded contracts, with a focus on establishment, that includes recruitment, strengthening relationships with Child Safety Service Centres, professional and resource development and community engagement.

Partnerships

- 57. The region has strong local government and non-government partnerships that support and enhance child protection service delivery. Partnerships with Queensland Health, Queensland Police Service, Education Queensland and Youth Justice are key to the ongoing work undertaken by the region. Attachment 3 includes networks, panels and governance groups operating in the Cairns Region. Some examples include:
 - a) the Regional Complex Assessment & Therapeutic Team. Queensland Health Evolve clinicians and senior regional departmental staff meet to determine priority access to therapeutic care for children and young people;
 - b) the Early Action Group. This is a multi-agency, colocated model that provides a case management approach to young people and families who are at risk of entering the youth justice system;
 - c) the Multi Agency Collaborative panel (MACP). This is a coordinated response to young people who have come into contact with the justice system and have a high chance of re-offending;
 - d) the Family Support Workers Network is a community of practice that aims to build skills and capability across the sector;
 - e) the Cairns South Communities for Children is a coordinated provider group focussed on improving the development, health and wellbeing of children under 12 years in the Cairns Southern area;
 - f) the Community Development, Cairns Safer Streets, is a co-located multiagency model delivering a range of direct services and coordination of services in central Cairns suburbs to reduce antisocial behaviours and improve community safety;


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- g) all regional towns and remote discrete communities have regular interagency meetings to coordinate responses where more than one agency involvement is required; and
- h) the Cairns Housing & Homelessness Integration Initiative provides coordinated care planning for people with multiple and complex needs.

Success stories

- 58. As at 31 March 2025, 79.4% of children and young people in out-of-care in the region were residing in approved family based care, including foster and kinship. The region has a consistent, targeted focus on increasing the number of children living in family-based care.
- 59. The region shares Good News Stories on a monthly basis. The themes of these Good News Stories include:
 - a) supporting children and young people in care to connect and spend time with kin;
 - b) successful reunification with parents;
 - c) improving school attendance and academic achievements;
 - d) celebration of sporting achievements including Regional and National representation;
 - e) celebration of 18th birthdays;
 - f) celebration of successful completion of Year 12, and attendance at school formals; and
 - g) young people striving, such as joining the Australian Defence Force and planning for their future study.

I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

Dated this 2nd day of September 2025.



CORINNE PORTA



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 CORINNE PORTA



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List of annexures

Annexure 1 Far North Queensland Organisational Chart

Annexure 2 Far North Queensland Regional Map

Annexure 3 Summary of Regional Networks


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CORINNE PORTA


.....
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COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF CORINNE PORTA
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD
SAFETY

Annexure 1 – Far North Queensland Organisational Chart

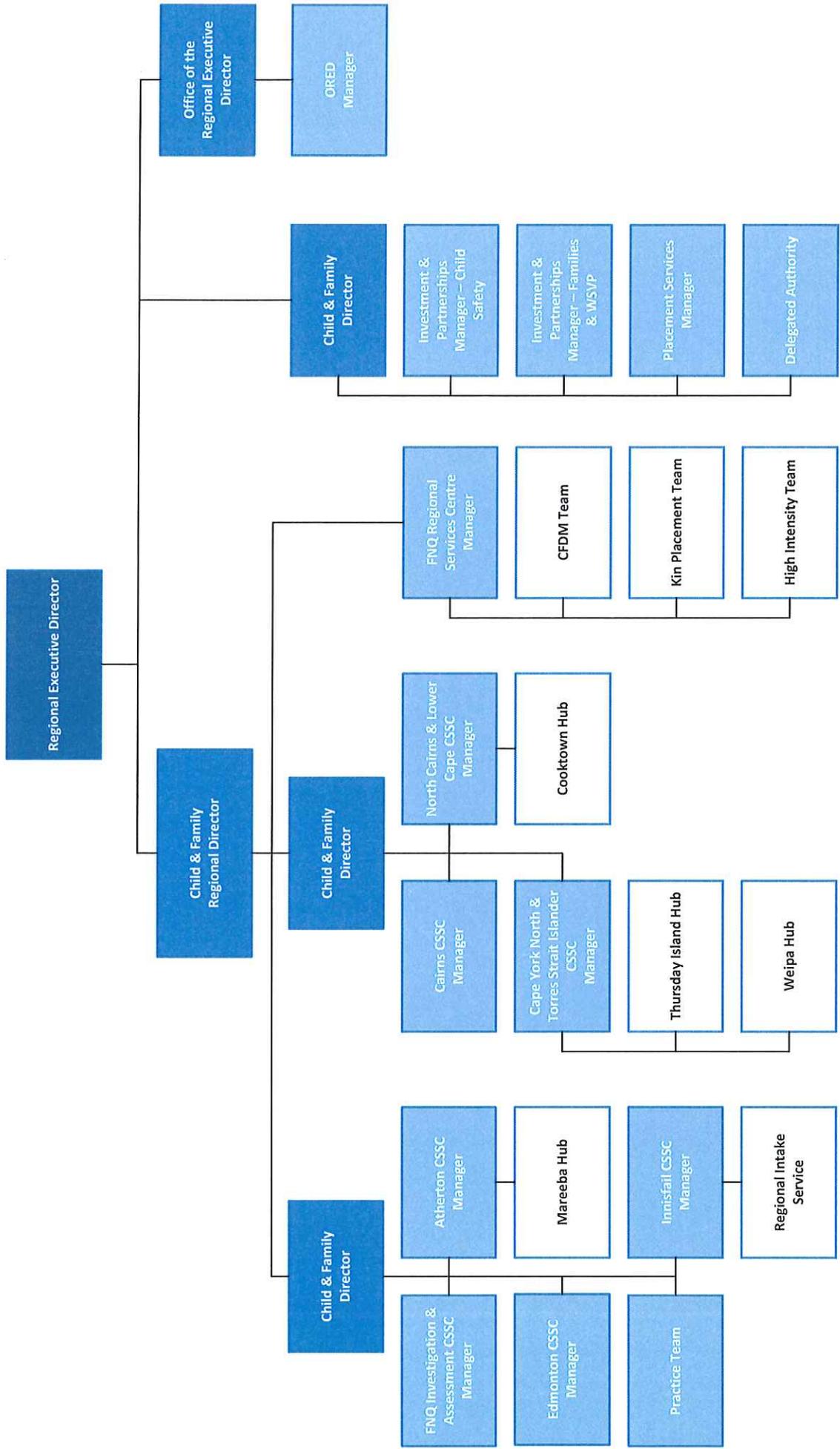
This and the preceding 1 page is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 1” in the statement of CORINNE PORTA dated 2 September 2025.

Corinne Porta

Witness

SERVICE DELIVERY – FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND REGION



COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF CORINNE PORTA

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY

Annexure 2 – Far North Queensland Regional Map

This and the preceding 1 page is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

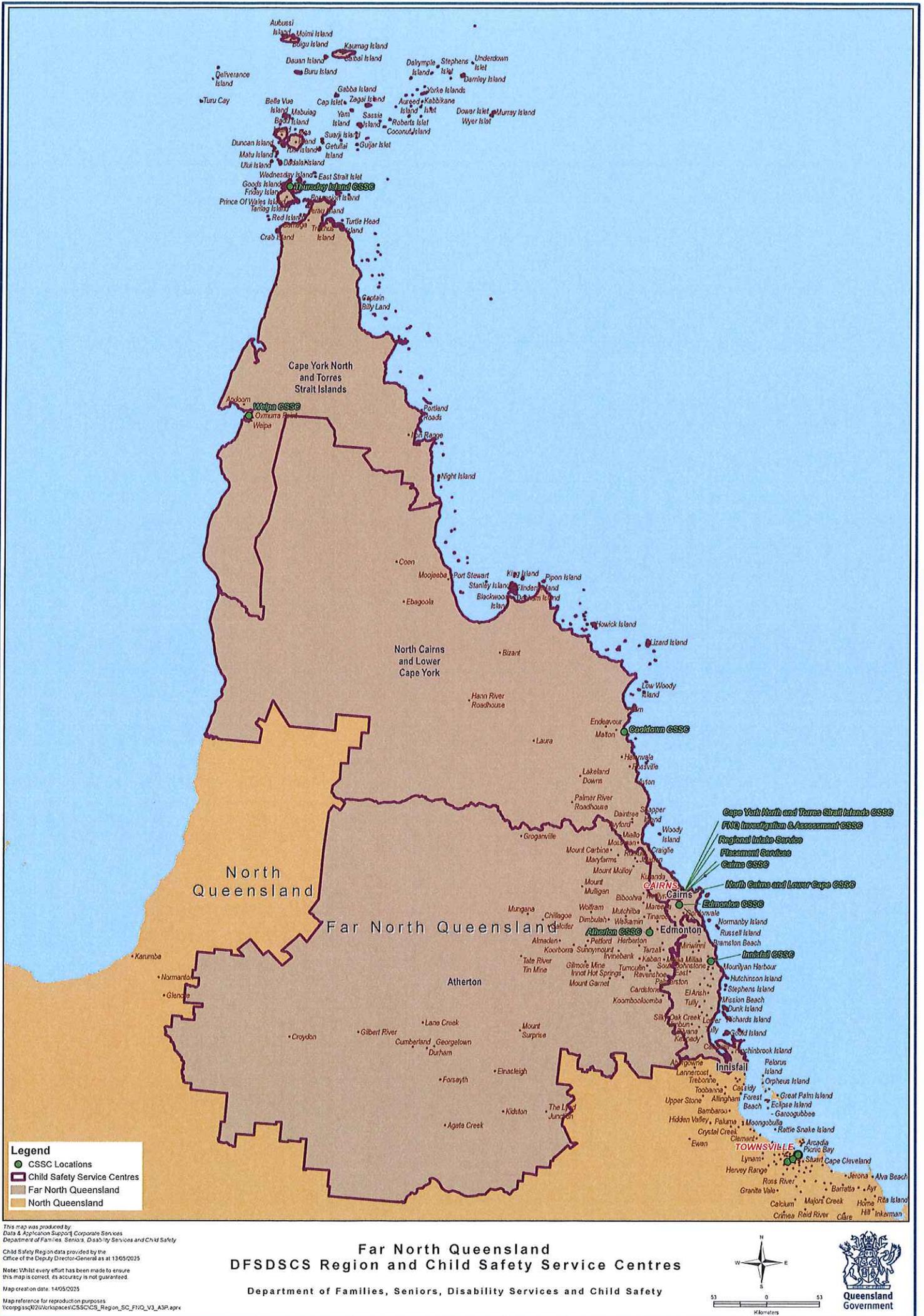
“Annexure 2” in the statement of CORINNE PORTA dated 2 September 2025.



Corinne Porta



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This map was produced by
 Data & Application Support Corporate Services
 Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

Child Safety Region data provided by the
 Office of the Deputy Director-General as at 13/05/2025

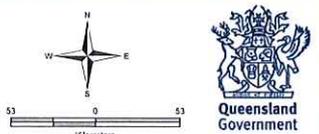
Note: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure
 this map is correct, its accuracy is not guaranteed.

Map creation date: 14/05/2025

Map reference for reproduction purposes
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Far North Queensland DFSDSCS Region and Child Safety Service Centres

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety



COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF CORINNE PORTA

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY

Annexure 3 – Summary of Regional Networks

This and the preceding 1 page is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 3” in the statement of CORINNE PORTA dated 2 September 2025.



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Cross-agency / Cross-sector

Regional Leadership Network
Local governance mechanism to drive inter-agency engagement and coordination to achieve economic, social and environmental benefits for the region. All three tiers of government represented.
Secretary

Cairns Region Local Disaster Management Group
Meets regularly to coordinate and develop strategies to help mitigate the effects of disasters on communities and be prepared to respond when disasters occur.
Chair

Cairns Regional Council Human and Social Sub Committee
Support and help coordinate response and recovery activities related to human and social systems of the Cairns region. Including responses to events, major incidents and chronic social issues that affect the region's long-term resilience.
Chair

Cairns South Together Governance Group
Steering committee for Cairns South Together which is a collaborative focused on improving the lives of Cairns South young people and their families, through a place-based collective impact approach.
Secretary

Cairns Safer Streets Executive Committee
The initiative is a multi-agency, co-located group of State Government representatives delivering innovative projects through community and whole-of-government.
Secretary

Cairns Early Action Group Executive Committee
The Cairns EAG coordinates multi-agency case management for children aged 0-16 years who are at moderate/high risk of future offending and their families. This committee provides strategic oversight for the early intervention initiative.
Secretary

Cairns Alliance of Social Services
Regional advocacy body for the social service sector with over 130 members from 10 sub-sectors. CASS aims for action to towards reducing inequality, disadvantage and poverty within the Cairns region.
Secretary

Children & Families

Family Support Workers Network
A community of practice which aims to develop the skills and capacity of family support workers within the Cairns region through sharing of intelligence and professional development.
Facilitator

Family Law Pathways Network
Brings together legal practitioners and social service practitioners to achieve a greater understanding of roles and supports that may be offered to families who require legal support.
Coordinator

Cairns South Communities for Children
Aims to improve the development, health and wellbeing of children aged 12 and under by addressing local needs and encouraging community participation. Committee provides strategic direction to the program and allocate funding to community needs.
Coordinator

The Village Sector Connector
Quarterly network meeting hosted by Cairns Safer Streets for practitioners working with vulnerable children, young people and their families.
Facilitator

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN)
Purpose is to enable a coordinated response to the protection needs of children through the sharing of information under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, the planning and coordinating of actions to assess and respond to children's protection needs.
Coordinator

Residential Care Sector Forum
Child Safety supported forum for operational planning and practice development with funded partners delivering residential care services.
Coordinator

Foster & Kinship Care Sector Forum
Child Safety supported forum for operational planning and practice development with funded partners delivering foster and kinship care services.
Coordinator

Young People

Tier 3 Governance Group FNQ Youth Justice Taskforce Action Plan
Provides governance for the implementation of the Youth Justice Taskforce Action Plan in FNQ with an emphasis on ensuring that stakeholder agencies with responsibilities within the action plan work collaboratively and are accountable in contributing to a reduction in reoffending.
Chair

Youth Justice Stakeholder Meeting
Network of agency providers and children and young people in the youth justice system.
Secretary

Youth Services Managers Network
Forum for local youth NGOs and government agencies to share information, understand barriers to service delivery, build networks and increase collaboration.
Chair

Coordinated Care for Vulnerable Young People (CCVP) Reference Group & Panel
Integrated initiative coordinating care for vulnerable and at-risk young people aged 10 to 18 years in the Cairns region.
CCVP Senior Care Coordinator

Multitasking Collaborative Panels
Comprised of members from key government departments and NGOs that provide a service response to young people who have come into contact with the courts and have a high risk of reoffending.
Coordinator

Transition to Adulthood Working Group
Aims to support young people exiting care to secure independent accommodation and supports, memberships includes child safety, housing and specialist homelessness services.
Facilitator

FLOW - Facilitating Learning or Work
An inter-agency network and case coordination panel that supports young people who are at risk of entering or are currently involved in the VJ system, to link into learning or work.
Facilitator

Housing & Homelessness

Cairns Housing & Homelessness Network
Forum for local NGOs to work together to deliver coordinated, effective and innovative responses to housing and homelessness in Cairns. Four subgroups report to the Network:
Advent to 0 (functional homelessness); Crisis accommodation & exiting institutions; Youth housing and homelessness; and Supportive Housing.
Chair

Cairns Housing & Homelessness Integration Initiative
Aims to provide coordinated care to people with multiple and complex needs experiencing homelessness and / or housing instability.
Coordinator

Disability

FNQ Coordinators of Funded Support
Is a forum to share market knowledge including funding and other opportunities, share practice learning and benchmarks and connect rural and remote services to the broader system.
Facilitator

Disability Provider Network
Aims to have a shared voice, an informative network of disability services in the Far North Queensland Region.
Facilitator

Lived Experience Group
Aims to build capacity and offer opportunities for people with a disability, families and carers to actively contribute to identifying barriers to access and inclusion and ways to make improvements for people with a disability.
Secretary

Domestic & Family Violence

Cairns Collective Impact on Domestic & Family Violence (CCDFV)
Formed as part of an active and integrated response to DV in the region, made up of 18 government and non-government agencies. The CCDFV seeks to improve responses to individuals, families and communities impacted by DV through service collaboration and through influencing attitudes towards DV.
Chair

Young Person Using Domestic Violence
The sub-working group operates under the broader CCDFV initiative and is dedicated to addressing the complex issue of young people engaging in behaviours characterised as domestic violence and aims to develop targeted, evidence-based strategies to prevent and reduce the incidence of violence perpetrated by young people.
Chair

DFV Integrated Service Response
The Integrated Service Response, including the DFV High Risk Team, aims to enhance the safety of women and children while holding perpetrators accountable. This is achieved through a collaborative, multi-agency approach that accepts referrals of high-risk clients, conducts comprehensive risk assessments and develops tailored safety plans.
Integration Manager

Cairns Specialist DV Court Operational Working Group
To provide a coordinated and collaborative approach to the operations, monitoring and ongoing development of the Specialist DV Court. It is also a forum for members to raise and resolve risks and issues relating to the operation of the specialist DV court, justice response.
Chair

Rural & Remote Indigenous Women's Shelter Network
Aimed at addressing the increasing complexity of challenges faced by women, living in Far North Queensland and Torres Strait communities and building capacity of crisis accommodation services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Facilitator

Health & Wellbeing

FNQ Alcohol & Other Drug Reference Group & Family Violence (FNQARDV)
Collective of specialist alcohol and other drugs treatment and human reduction services in FNQ to share knowledge and intelligence, connect, collaborate and provide advice at a State-wide level.
Chair

Mental Health Alliance
Aims to share policy, legislation and intelligence across the sector, lobby for the region, network and collaborate on shared projects and funding opportunities.
Facilitator

FNQ Allied Health Network
Aims to develop partnerships with the health and social support systems to coordinate quality allied health services throughout FNQ and develop a shared understanding of the needs and priorities of allied health professionals within FNQ.
Facilitator

FNQ Suicide Prevention Community Action Plan Advisory Group
The Cairns and Hinterland Suicide Prevention Community Action Plan (SPCAP) is a community and sector endorsed path forward for coordinated suicide prevention activities across the region.
Facilitator

NQ Primary Health Network Community Advisory Group
Ensures that practical recommendations and advice from a local perspective are included in investment decisions and to progress outcomes.
Secretary

CALD Communities

Local Area Collaborative Humanitarian Settlement
Aims to collaborate for the benefit of humanitarian entrants across the Cairns region. Provide a platform to share information and collaborate on key settlement related issues.
Facilitator

CALD Community Cultural Leaders
Brings together CALD community leaders within the Cairns region, understand community need and emerging issues and provides a community of practice.
Chair

Early Years

Far North Early Childhood Network
Raising the profile of the importance of the early years and aiming for every child in FNQ to enter school healthy and ready to engage. Place-based Early Childhood Community Networks (ECCNs) operate in Cairns, Beaches, Cairns Central / Cairns North and Secretary

Other networks

Brekky Net
One hour platform to develop an integrated, coordinated continuum of services for Cairns South through strengthened partnerships between government, NGOs, businesses and community members.
Coordinator

Neighbourhood and Community Centre Network
To grow the collective impact of the Neighbourhood and Community Centre sector by increasing resourcing, recognition and relationships at the local level.
Coordinator

Emergency Relief Provider Network
Forum for regional emergency relief (ER) coordination, ER preparation for emerging needs, sharing of information between ER provider and liaison between auspice organisations.
Facilitator

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
Role is to foster cooperation and resource sharing between Councils and effectively advocate regional positions and priorities. In doing this we also work closely with regional partners and stakeholders.
Coordinator

Regional Development Australia RDA Tropical North
works to support economic development, regional growth and focuses on identifying local priorities, fostering partnerships and driving initiatives that strengthen their region's economy and community.
Chair

Cairns Chamber of Commerce
Network representing the interests of local businesses, providing advocacy, networking opportunities and resources to support business growth and economic development in the Cairns region.
Chair

Advance Cairns
Focused on driving economic growth and investment, acting as a regional advocacy body, working closely with government, industry and community stakeholders to secure funding and policy support for key infrastructure and development projects.
Chair

Network Map

This document provides an overview of all the networks, panels and governance groups operating in the Cairns Region.

Please contact cairns.safet streets@police.qld.gov.au if an update is required. V.2.1