

## Child Safety Commission of Inquiry



### **Far North Queensland first regional hearing announced**

The Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety has today announced it will hold its first regional hearing in Cairns early next month.

The public hearing will begin on Monday 8 September and will last for about seven to 10 days.

The Inquiry will hear evidence from various government and non-government departments, peak industry bodies representing carers, residential care providers and First Nations organisations, foster carers, kinship carers and frontline workers among others.

The announcement follows the Commission's recent visit to Far North Queensland.

The Commissioner, the Honourable Paul Anastassiou KC, said he and his team spent a week in Cairns, consulting widely, to gain firsthand insight from the community.

"I want to thank the Cairns community, particularly to the groups and individuals I have spoken to, for coming forward, and sharing their experiences and stories with us," Mr Anastassiou said.

"Community input is vital which is why this Inquiry is taking a ground up approach to ensure those with direct experiences of how the child safety system works and its strengths and challenges are heard. This will enable the inquiry to make informed recommendations for any necessary and practical reforms to the system.

"In Cairns, my team and I met with foster and kinship carers, outreach service workers, Department employees, representatives of the Office of the Public Guardian and community visitors, as well as a delegation of officers within the Queensland Police Service and council.

“Senior Counsel Assisting and I also travelled to the community of Yarrabah to consult directly with workers involved in delivering community justice and health services on country.

“We also attended a meeting hosted by Wuchopperen Health Service, where we held a roundtable discussion with QATSICPP. Here we discussed the challenges remote communities like Cape York face in obtaining necessary child safety services and maintaining connection to kin and country when children and young people are placed in state care.”

The Commission encourages those who have had experience and contact with the child protection system to make a [submission](#) relating to any matter within its Terms of Reference by visiting the [Child Safety Inquiry website](#).

### **About Submissions**

Public submissions are vital to the Inquiry, providing key insights to deepen its understanding of the issues “on the ground” and develop informed recommendations.

### **About public hearings**

Public hearings can be observed by any person, either at the venue location or online via the Child Safety Inquiry website. Those attending will be expected to comply with the usual rules of a courtroom and the [practice guidelines](#) on the Child Safety Inquiry website.

**Ends.**

**Media Contact: 0475 281 861**