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**CHILD SAFETY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
STATE OF QUEENSLAND
PROACTIVE STATEMENT NO. 7**

STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

I, **Victoria Van Houdt**, of care of Crown Law, Level 11, 50 Ann Street, Brisbane, acting Chief Practitioner, Office of the Chief Practitioner, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (**the Department**), in the State of Queensland state as follows:

1. My qualifications include a Bachelor of Science (Applied Psychology) and a Bachelor of Laws.
2. I have been employed in the field of child protection and adoptions for 25 years, having undertaken roles including Child Safety Officer, Senior Team Leader, Manager, Regional Director and Director, Child Protection Practice.
3. As the acting Chief Practitioner, I am responsible for providing strategic leadership and oversight to the Delegated Authority team, Domestic and Family Violence Integrated Service Response Program, Child Safety complaints, training, and child death and serious injury reviews teams; specialist services supporting child protection practice and for children with a disability; and the teams responsible for practice capability, complex case consultation, operational policy, procedures, partnerships and programs.
4. Prior to commencing as acting Chief Practitioner in April 2025, I held the position of Director, Child Protection Practice in the Office of the Chief Practitioner, which includes overseeing child safety operational policy and procedures for the Department.

INTRODUCTION

5. This statement supports the information outlined in the proactive statement number 1 by Belinda Drew, Director General to the Commission of Inquiry into the Child Protection System (the Inquiry).
6. This statement provides an overview of the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system, drivers



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Witness

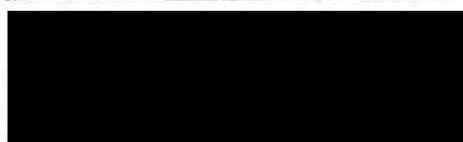
and previous reforms, and key work underway by the Department to reduce disproportionate representation.

7. The information provided below includes advice received from relevant business units responsible for service delivery and practice within the Department, including the Office of the Chief Practitioner, Service Delivery, Investment and Commissioning and Strategy, Policy and Legislation.

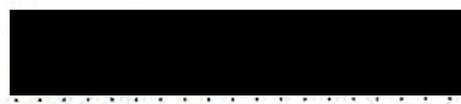
DATA AND TRENDS

8. Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland live safely at home in community and culture. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families continue to be disproportionately represented in the child protection system in Queensland, with the disparity growing at each level of child protection intervention.
9. As at 31 March 2025, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children represent:
 - a) 25.7 per cent of all children subject to an intake;
 - b) 31.1 per cent of all children subject to a notification;
 - c) 37.3 per cent of all children subject to a substantiation (31 December 2024); and
 - d) 47.8 per cent of children in care.
10. As at 31 March 2025, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care placed with kin is 46.9 per cent.
11. The *2025 Closing the Gap Annual Data Compilation Report* (CtG Report) shows progress against Target 12¹ as worsening nationally, with Queensland also not on track to meet the target in 2031.
12. The CtG Report shows that at 30 June 2019 (baseline), there were 3,576 or 33.2 per 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people living in care in Queensland. By 30 June 2024, this had increased to 4,961 or 42.9 per 1,000.
13. As at 31 March 2025, a reduction of 5,421 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care is needed to achieve parity with non-Indigenous children in care in Queensland.

¹ Target 12 is to reduce the rate of overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (0-17 years) in out-of-home care by 45 per cent by 2031.



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POLICY CONTEXT

National context

14. The Queensland Government is a signatory to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which includes Target 12 to reduce the rate of overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45 per cent by 2031.
15. Under Closing the Gap states and territories have committed to implementing reforms across four priority areas to achieve the targets: formal partnerships and shared decision making, building the community controlled sector, transforming government organisations (to become more culturally safe), and shared access to data and information.
16. The Queensland Government has also committed to *Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031*, including its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, which sets out national priorities and actions to improve outcomes for children and families in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders.

Queensland context

17. The final report of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Carmody Inquiry), *Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection* made recommendations to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering the child protection system and improve care quality for those in care.
18. Following the Carmody Inquiry, the *Towards a Queensland Action Plan for Vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families* (2016) was developed under the *Supporting Families Changing Futures* reform program to implement the Carmody Inquiry's recommendations (refer to Notice to Produce 3).
19. The action plan led to the development of *Our Way: A Generational Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families 2017-2037* (Our Way), which aims to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up safe, cared for, and connected to family, community, and culture and eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. A copy of Our Way (**Annexure 1**) is provided.
20. Our Way was the first generational strategy in Australia co-designed with community to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

21. The Queensland First Children and Families Board (the Board) was established in 2018 to provide independent strategic advice, cultural leadership, and oversight for the implementation of Our Way. The Board includes eight community members, the Co-chair of Family Matters Queensland, and the Directors-General of the Department and the Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism.
22. The Department is committed to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and building cultural capability to ensure policies, services and practice are culturally responsive and maximise outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
23. *Yangga Dahgu – Makem Gen* (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap) outlines the Department’s roadmap to a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. A copy of the Reframing the Relationship Roadmap (**Annexure 2**) is provided. In December 2024, the Department launched the *Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees Policy* (**Annexure 3**).

Historical policy context

24. The Department’s submission to the Queensland Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry (TTHI) on 26 August 2024 provides a high-level summary of the administrative arrangements of child protection and adoption functions and responsibilities, including legislation administered, from 1856 to 2024 (**Annexure 4**).

WORK UNDERWAY

25. The Department continues to work with the Queensland First Children and Families Board, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (CCOs) and Indigenous Businesses to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families can access the support they need to care for their children safely at home.

Transition of Investment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CCOs

26. The Department’s commitment to transitioning investment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CCOs within the Child and Family Services system, aims to ensure that services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to care for their children safely at home are co-developed, delivered by the communities and organisations who know them best, and meet local priorities and needs.
27. While Queensland’s percentage of total expenditure to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CCOs is below the national average of 6 per cent at 4.2 per cent, Queensland has the highest proportion (22.2 per cent) of investment in family support services and intensive family support services through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CCOs compared to all states and territories (2022-23 figures).



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Family Wellbeing Services

28. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services (FWS) were established in response to Carmody Inquiry Recommendation 11.1 to ensure families whose children are at risk of harm could access services without requiring prior contact with the Department.
29. FWS offer Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and families who may be experiencing vulnerability a range of services to build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children.
30. FWS are established in 36 locations and offer a range of services from early intervention responses through to supporting children and families where ongoing child safety intervention is required.
31. For the year ending 31 March 2025, 5762 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were referred to FWS.
32. Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who had the majority, or all their needs met through FWS participation, 85.6 per cent were not subject to a subsequent investigation by the Department within the following six months (as at 31 March 2025).

First Nations Intake Officer

33. The First Nations Intake Officer trial aimed to enable culturally informed intake assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and reduce the potential of cultural bias in decision-making. The trial also aimed to provide the most appropriate and culturally responsive services to ensure the family's needs are met to mitigate the risk of further involvement with the child protection system.
34. The trial was conducted in the Sunshine Coast and Central Regional Intake Service (RIS) from June 2023 to November 2023. It involved a dedicated First Nations Senior Team Leader and two First Nations Intake Officers managing intakes in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Gympie and Fraser Coast catchment areas who were reported to the RIS.
35. An evaluation of the program in October 2024 recommended embedding and expanding the First Nations Intake Officer Program, which is now underway.. Every RIS across Queensland has a First Nations Senior Team Leader recruited and is actively recruiting two First Nations Intake Officers to replicate the trial composition.



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Family Participation Program

36. Commencing in November 2018, the Family Participation Program (FPP) provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to participate in child protection decision-making.
37. FPP works with parents, families and children to independently facilitate an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led decision-making process, which gives authority to parents, families and children to work together to solve problems and lead decision-making in a culturally safe space.

Delegated Authority

38. Delegated authority refers to the process undertaken to implement Chapter 4, Part 2A of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (CP Act) that provides for the delegation of one or more of the chief executive's functions or powers in relation to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child to a 'prescribed delegate'.
39. The Department and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) co-developed *Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming the systems and practices by making decisions in our way* (Reclaiming our Storyline), a 10-year blueprint to implement delegated authority across Queensland.
40. Reclaiming our Storyline acknowledges the importance of connection to family and culture and that the safety of wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is better supported by the organisations that understand their needs and aspirations best.
41. As of 30 June 2025, there are a total of 19 delegated authority service responses delivered by 14 organisations in partnership with the Department across Queensland with delegations for 315 children.
42. Locations include Emerald, Fitzroy, Mount Archer, Gympie, Caloundra, Maroochydore, Palm Island, Ipswich North, Toowoomba South, Springfield, Browns Plains, Local Central, Mermaid Beach, Labrador, Inala, Mount Gravatt, Mackay, Torres Strait, Kowanyama; Fraser Coast; Moreton Bay, Bundaberg, Cairns and Innisfail.



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Kinship Screening

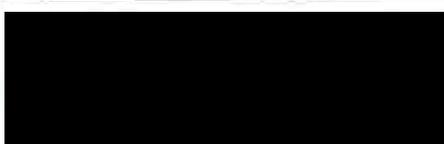
43. In 2023, the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) Report - *A thematic analysis of provisionally approved kinship carers who receive a subsequent Blue Card negative notice* (QFCC Report), found blue card screening is not designed for kinship care, and its processes create additional barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship carers.
44. In response to the QFCC Report recommendations, the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024*, passed by the Legislative Assembly on 11 September 2024, included amendments that will remove the requirement for kinship carers and their adult household members to hold a blue card. The amendments have not yet commenced and will not commence until a new, fit-for-purpose screening framework is developed.
45. A second stage of legislative reform will be required to implement a fit-for-purpose framework for screening kinship carers. It is anticipated that removing barriers to kinship care will support more children to be cared for by kin, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Kin Teams

46. Throughout 2021 to 2023, the Department established regional Kin Teams aimed at improving placement outcomes by enabling more children to live with kin and contribute to reducing the number of children placed in residential care.
47. Kin Teams represent a dedicated resource to find kin, connect children with their kin, support kin placement processes at the investigation and assessment stage, and support internal and external partners to build practice and confidence in finding and engaging with kin.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability

48. Since 2018, there has been a disparity of the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and with ongoing intervention accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), becoming clear in comparison to non-Indigenous children in care.
49. Child Safety's NDIS Closing the Gap Action Plans 2019-2021 was developed to address intake, investigation and assessment and ongoing intervention issues. Through coordinated efforts, improvements have been observed in the data.
50. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability action plan 2025-2027, codesigned with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CCOs, child protection peaks, families, carers and community, allows active efforts for improvement to life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and/or



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developmental delays and their families through culturally appropriate NDIS supports.

51. A copy of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability action plan 2025-2027 (Annexure 5) is provided.
52. Enhanced disability supports will further assist and sustain kinship care, reunification and reduce disproportionate representation in child protection.

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

Dated this 5th day of September 2025.



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List of Annexures

- Annexure 1 Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037
- Annexure 2 Yangga Dahgu – Makem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)
- Annexure 3 Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees Policy
- Annexure 4 Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services submission to the Queensland Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry
- Annexure 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability action plan 2025-2027



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COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

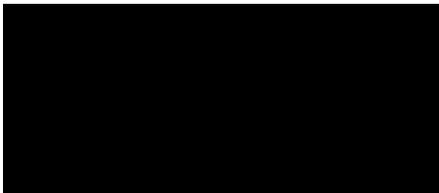
PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

A/CHIEF PRACTITIONER, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY

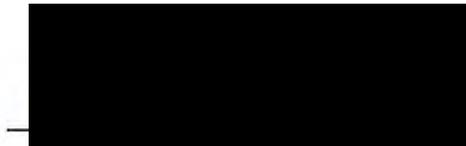
**Annexure 1 – Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037**

This and the preceding 28 pages is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

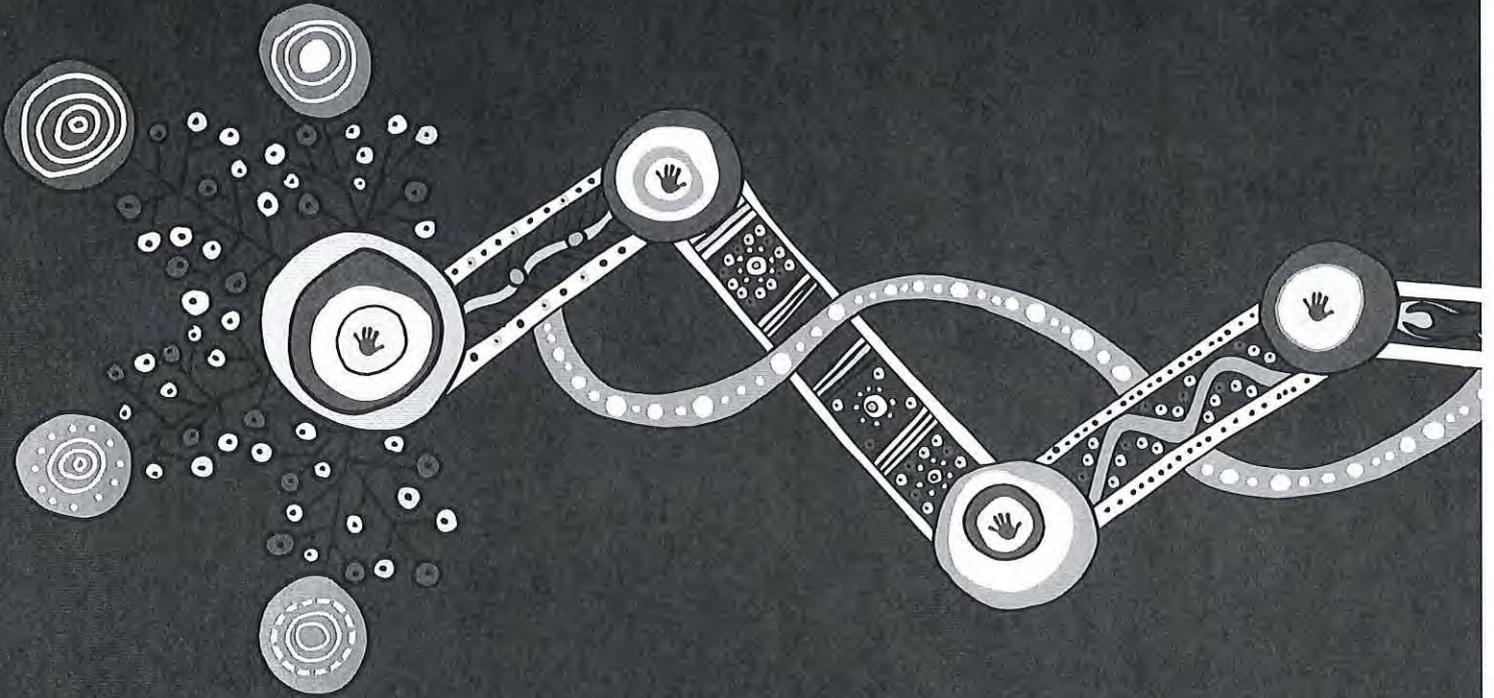
“Annexure 1” in the statement of Victoria Van Houdt dated 5 September 2025.



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Our Way

**A generational strategy for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander children and families**

2017–2037

supporting  changing
families **futures**



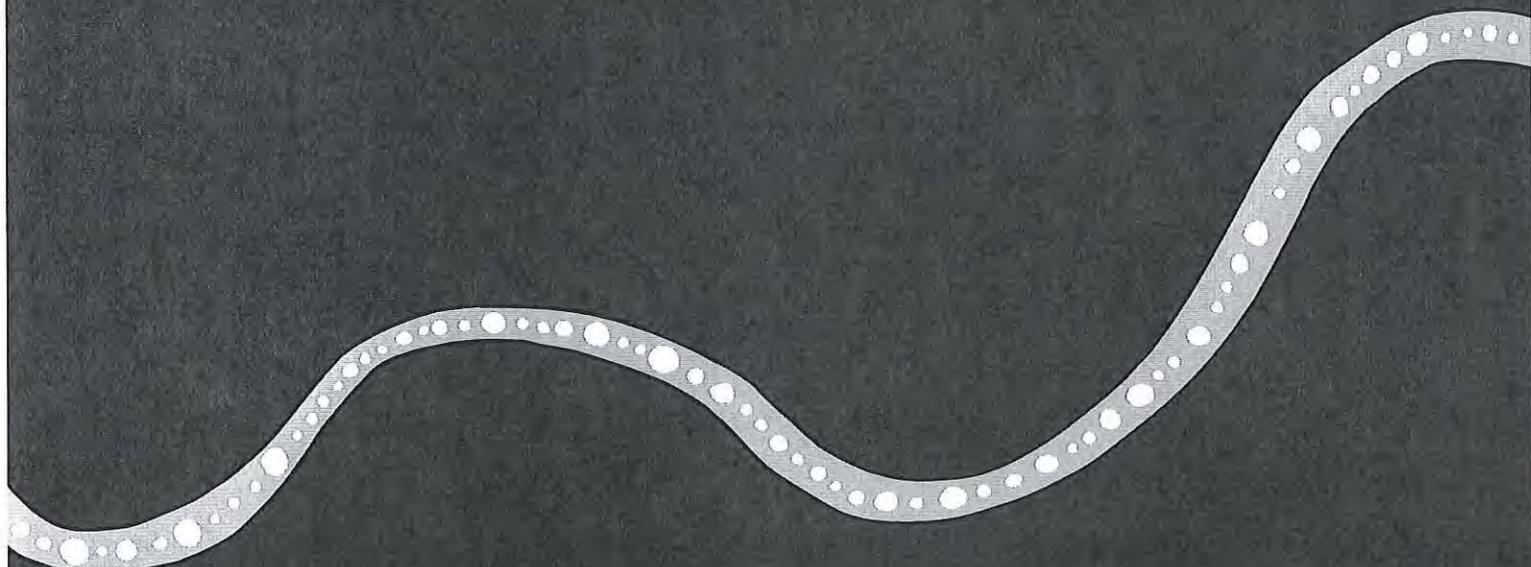
We respectfully acknowledge the First Nations people in the State of Queensland, we acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and sea.

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people as two unique and diverse peoples with their own rich and distinct cultures.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present as well as the existing and emerging leaders who walk together in partnership on this journey.

This strategy represents our shared commitment, and use of the word 'we' throughout refers to the shared voice of the Queensland Government and Family Matters Queensland, and reflects the combined voices of families and communities.

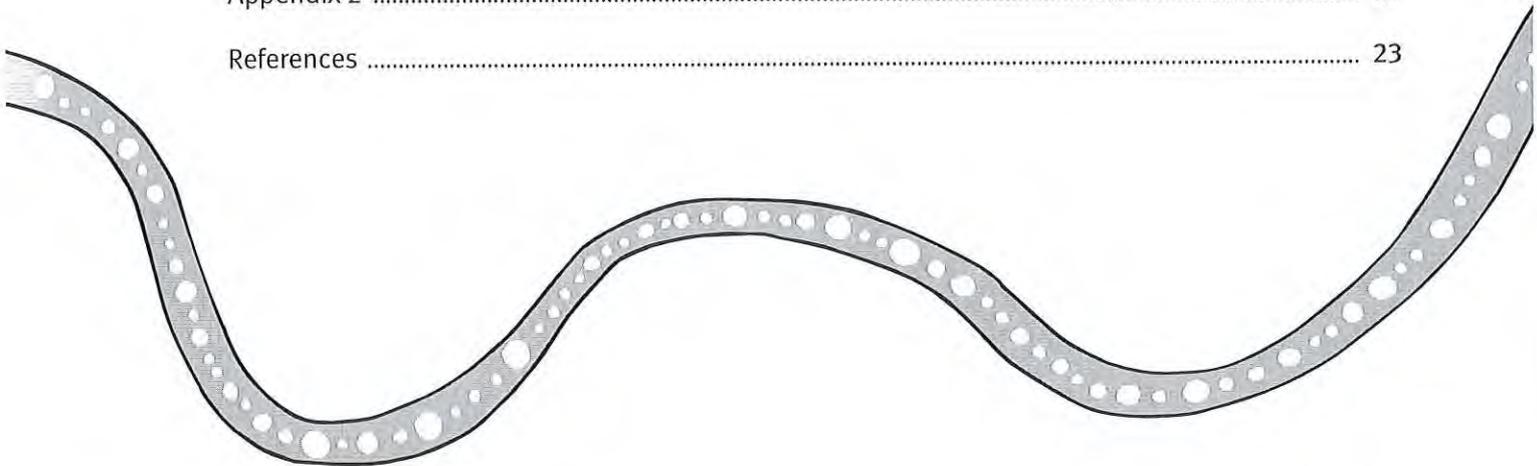
We acknowledge the contributions of Rachael Sarra for the original design of artworks and the creative leadership of Gilimbaa in this strategy.





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Joint message from Family Matters Queensland and the Queensland Government

In 2017 it is unacceptable that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not have the same wellbeing outcomes as their non-Indigenous peers. It is also unacceptable that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are disproportionately represented in the tertiary child protection system at concerning levels.

Together with Family Matters — a national campaign led by more than 150 Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations across Australia — we are committed to eliminating this disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in statutory out-of-home care, within a generation.

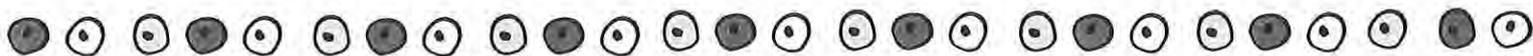
As Queenslanders, we are proud to be the first jurisdiction in Australia where government has worked with Family Matters to develop a shared strategy to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in Queensland grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

We have co-developed this strategy — which outlines *Our Way* to achieve these aspirations — in partnership. Reflected in it are the views and voices of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members and non-government organisations.

Our Way outlines a framework for transformational change that will occur over the next 20 years. It represents a long-term commitment by government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to work together. We acknowledge that we need to work in a different way to improve the life outcomes of vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and set the right conditions so each child can reach their full potential and thrive. This is *Our Way* to achieve that.

Parents, with support from families and communities, have the primary responsibility and accountability for raising their children and keeping them safe. Setting expectations, attitudes, norms and behaviours that reinforce parental and family responsibilities, and that do not tolerate violence, abuse or neglect, are an essential part of our strategy.

Our role is to work together to support, enable and equip parents with the tools and resources to successfully meet their responsibilities and empower them to make informed decisions where their children are concerned. Together we must take a broad, holistic and cultural perspective to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.



‘We can do anything if we know who we are.’

Voice of an Elder 2016

Our Way acknowledges the strength, determination and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that most children are well cared for in their families and communities. It also recognises the devastating and continuing impacts of past and current laws, policies and practices that too often cause disconnection, trauma and disadvantage. Too little recognition, respect and resourcing has been afforded to cultural strengths, responsibilities, connections and leadership.

We commit to respond in ways that support and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to exercise their responsibilities and to heal, grow and prosper.

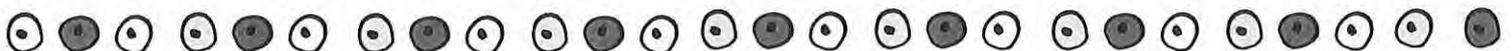
We commit to changing the way we do business — our laws, investments, policies and practices and how we work with Queensland’s First Nations children, families and communities — to design, develop and deliver actions that will make a real and meaningful change within a generation.



Family Matters Queensland

Shannon Fentiman MP
Minister for Communities,
Women and Youth,
Minister for Child Safety and
Minister for the Prevention of
Domestic and Family Violence

Mark Furner MP
Minister for Local Government
and Minister for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Partnerships



We need a generational strategy

The majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children live safely at home and have developed a clear identity linked to their communities and culture. This is because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have strong and rich cultural and community networks, spirituality and ways of raising children that encourages their development, resourcefulness and resilience. It prepares children for adulthood and their roles and responsibilities to family and community.¹

However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland continue to experience disadvantage. Some live in unsafe situations that leads to their removal from their families, communities and cultures at more than eight times the rate of non-Indigenous children.² Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also share a continued legacy of pain, trauma, fear, distrust and anger as a result, in part, of government decisions, policies and practices.

Too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience poverty, disconnection, ill-health and addiction, violence, and financial and housing stress, as well as discrimination and racism.

In Queensland, this reality means that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children do not have the same opportunities as other children. If current trends continue, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people will account for more than half of all Queensland children in out-of-home care within five years. We must break this intergenerational cycle.

Clearly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's current experiences of organisations, systems and, at times, community adversely affects their opportunity to grow up safe and well with their families and receive the support they need to achieve their full potential throughout their lives.³

We are deeply concerned about this increasing disparity in life and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. This strategy, and associated action plans, seeks to close these gaps. It builds on significant changes occurring through the Queensland Government's *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's child protection and family support reforms* program. This includes strategies and initiatives to improve life outcomes and responses to:

- health, mental health and disability
- housing
- early childhood and education
- employment and training
- domestic and family violence and violence against women
- financial resilience.

'Not enough has been done about achieving tangible solutions and actions that are historically informed and respectful, culturally appropriate, and community or kinship sensitive'

— *Family Matters Queensland 2016*

This strategy, at its heart, is about self-determination: empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to exercise opportunities to live well, according to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and beliefs and the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Realising meaningful change will take targeted and sustained effort over time. It will take a new approach to designing and delivering services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The national Family Matters campaign has set an ambitious target to achieve our shared vision within a generation. All levels of government, the community and families must make a concerted effort over the next 20 years for this to occur.

What we know

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders experience disadvantage and poorer life outcomes at much higher rates than other Queenslanders.



More likely to have a shorter life span, with a **life expectancy gap**

10.8 years less
8.6 years less^A

1.6 x more likely to die during infancy^B

Health



Child and family services

8.5 x more likely to be placed in **out-of-home care** than non-Indigenous children^C

Often not placed with families of the same culture, with **43.5%** of children not placed with kin or other Indigenous carers when placed in out-of-home care^D



Mental health and emotional wellbeing

2.6 x more likely to experience **very high/high levels of psychological distress** than non-Indigenous people^E

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are:



Economic wellbeing

4.3 x more likely to experience **unemployment** when aged 15–64 years than non-Indigenous people^F

Home and environment



5.6 x more likely to live in households requiring extra bedrooms than non-Indigenous households^G

Learning and skills

Twice as likely as non-Indigenous children to be **developmentally vulnerable** in early childhood, and continue to have **gaps in literacy and numeracy** throughout their school life^H

Less likely to be in formal education, with **87.2%** of children attending primary school compared with **93.7%** of non-Indigenous children^I



Safety

18.2 x more likely to be admitted to **youth detention** than their non-Indigenous peers^J

3.6 x more likely to be a **victim of violence** than non-Indigenous people^K

A: ROGS 2017 (Table EA.47); B: ROGS 2017 (Table EA54); C: DCCSDS June 2016; D: DCCSDS June 2016; E: NATSISS 2015 Table 23.3; F: NATSISS 2015 Table 20.3; G: ROGS 2017, Table BA9 (data is for year 2015) (note actual ratio is 2:1). NAPLAN National Report ACARA (data is for year 2016); H: NIRA 2015-16, Table 13.3 (data is for year 2016); I: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014-15, Table 24.3; J: DJAG YJ Performance and Reporting (data is for year 2015-16); K: QGSO Reported victims of offences against the person, Queensland, 2014-15.

What we want

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland have the right to a bright, healthy and powerful future — a future that is shaped by their own aspirations and unquestionable potential, rather than entrenched disadvantage and low expectations.

Every child deserves an equal chance to grow up well, thrive and achieve their best hopes for their life. These rights are enshrined in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Australia ratified the convention in December 1990. We have a shared responsibility to ensure all children in Australia enjoy these rights.^{4,5,6}

We believe in a Queensland where

Children:

- are **born healthy** and meet developmental milestones
- **grow up safe** in their families and communities
- develop and maintain their **personal and cultural identity** and good community connections
- have the opportunity to **play** and engage with other children and young people in safe environments
- have the opportunity to **learn, develop their skills, maximise their capabilities** and pursue their interests
- live in a society that values their identity and is **free from racism** and discrimination
- are placed with kin, and enabled to **reconnect or reunify with families**, if in out-of-home care
- can grow as **citizens and leaders**, taking their place and strengthening their cultures in contemporary society.

Families:

- are ready and **able to parent**
- have strong kin and **community networks**
- have a stable, **safe and suitable place to live** and raise their children
- have **access to information**, advice and support to enable them to deal with life challenges
- live healthily and **free from violence** and abuse
- have access to **support to heal**, restore and promote their wellbeing
- participate in the economy through **employment** and enterprise and experience financial resilience and independence
- make use of early childhood services, **act as first teachers**, and engage fully with the schooling of their children



- engage in **lifelong learning** by participating in education and training opportunities
- enable access to cultural, recreational, artistic and sporting **opportunities for their children**
- when vulnerable, access **wellbeing** and other specialist services and supports
- when at risk, **access integrated services** and coordinated support
- can exercise **greater choice, control and cultural authority** over decisions that affect them.

Children can rightfully expect to be born into families who:

1. Choose to become parents at a time when they are resourced and supported to provide optimum care for the child who will be born to them
2. Seek appropriate preventative and early intervention medical and cultural supports prior to, during and after the first 1000 days
3. Can nourish them in the mother's womb with good quality nutrition, free from alcohol, smoke and the experience of violence
4. Have loving expectations of them, are hopeful about their future and help them to achieve their life aspirations in powerful and tender ways
5. Participate in their education from birth to ensure that personal aspirations are nurtured and aligned with our people's cultural values, responsibilities and entrepreneurial spirit
6. Provide an appropriately stimulating environment, age-appropriate games, and the ability to grow with siblings and family members who themselves are capable of experienced and knowledgeable caring and parenting
7. Know who they are, where they come from, who they are connected to, who loves them, who advocates for them, who listens to them, and who is responsible for them – culturally, morally, physically, spiritually and emotionally
8. Are part of a healthy, vibrant society shaped by strong kinship relationships and a resilient culture, in which all members thrive, flourish and enjoy the same opportunities as other Australians – without being made the same
9. Have healed and broken free from trans-generational trauma, and are able to transform harmful experiences into a positive future for their children and grandchildren
10. Have the capacity to celebrate their children and offer them ceremonies, rituals, language, songs, stories and environments that strengthen their resilience, encourage their growth and support their choice of identity.

First 1000 Days Australia Council Inaugural Statement ⁷

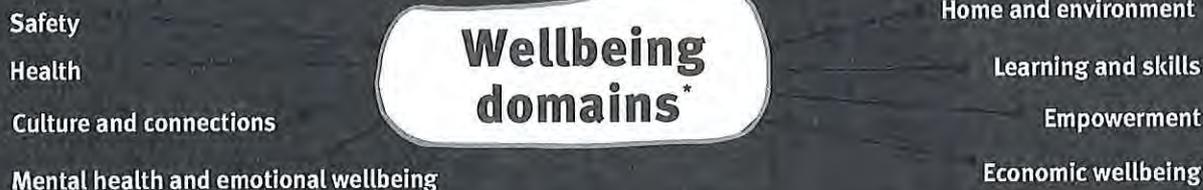
Our strategy at a glance



Our **vision** is that all **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** and young people in Queensland **grow up safe and cared for** in family, community and culture.

Our **target** is to **close the gap in life outcomes** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and **eliminate the disproportionate representation** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system by 2037.

The **outcome** we want to achieve is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experience parity across the following:



Building blocks



All families enjoy **access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services** necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations **participate in and have control over decisions** that affect their children



Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are **culturally safe and responsive**



Governments and community services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Enablers

Focus on the child	Empower parents, families and communities
Enable self-determination	Set high expectations and positive norms
Take a holistic and life-course approach	Recognise culture as a protective factor
Address trauma and enable healing	Share power, responsibility and accountability
Shift and balance investment	Provide accessible and coordinated services
Create partnerships	Innovate, build evidence and adjust

Who benefits

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in contact with family support and child protection systems

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in or leaving out-of-home care

Priority areas for first three years

Meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women under 25 years, and their partners, before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1000 days

Increasing access to, and involvement in, early years, health and disability programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 2–5 years

Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who have complex needs and children at risk with the right services

Services and systems

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care to thrive, and re-engaging those disconnected from family and kin

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged 15–21 years in or leaving out-of-home care to learn and earn, and stay safe and well

Implementation framework

Changing Tracks

First and second action plans

2017–2019
2020–2022

Breaking Cycles

Third, fourth and fifth action plans

2023–2025
2026–2028
2029–2031

Hitting Targets

Sixth and seventh action plans

2032–2034
2035–2037

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review

* These proposed wellbeing domains derive from a range of sources, including the ARACY Common Approach Wellbeing Wheel, and the OECD's Better Life Index. Development of a Queensland Child and Family Outcomes Framework is underway, and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Outcomes Framework as a part of this will be advanced in the first action plan.

We have made a commitment

The Queensland Government has signed the Family Matters national campaign's Statement of Commitment to ensure Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture. These national-level principles will underpin and guide our strategy.

Principle 1: Applying a child focused approach

We recognise that in all actions concerning children, their best interests should be the paramount consideration and that ensuring their safety is essential. Advancing the best interests of children requires the holistic realisation of their rights, including rights to safety, family, housing, health, education, culture and participation. We understand that the best interests of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child can only be properly determined with the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Accordingly, we will:

- ensure that the best interests of the child, informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, is the paramount consideration in all decisions about the care and protection of children
- promote the inclusion of children's voices in all decisions that affect them.

Principle 2: Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children

We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the strengths and the right to lead change for their own children. Governments and services should provide mechanisms and supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, communities and organisations to participate in and drive decision-making about the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Accordingly, we will:

- build and transfer capacity to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to provide services that respond to the needs of their communities
- ensure policies and mechanisms to facilitate the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families in all decisions that affect them
- recognise the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to drive local solutions to local issues.

Principle 3: Protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's right to live in culture

We recognise that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connections to their family, community and culture are critical to their wellbeing and positive self-identity. We also recognise the evidence that cultural and community networks support safety for children, and that continuity of cultural identity promotes healthy development. We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the right to practise their cultures with their families and communities.

Accordingly, we will:

- promote and enable the full implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in line with its intent to maintain quality cultural connections for children throughout their involvement with child protection systems
- develop the capability of organisations and staff to work in culturally safe and competent ways to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.



Principle 4: Pursuing evidence-based responses

We believe that in responding to the issue of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems, our efforts should be based on the evidence of what works. This evidence base critically includes the knowledge, wisdom and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Accordingly, we will:

- respect and practically apply research findings on what is effective to respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, recognising the critical importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in research to the quality of the evidence base
- listen to the knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on how best to respond to the needs of their children and families, including by resourcing and supporting community-led program evaluation and research.

Principle 5: Supporting, healing and strengthening families

We recognise that family is the foundation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s social, cultural and emotional wellbeing and is their most important lifelong support. We acknowledge the unique need for healing supports to address the impacts of intergenerational trauma on families that has resulted from experiences of colonisation, the Stolen Generations and other discriminatory government policies. We recognise and respect the evidence that shows that early intervention is critical to heal and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to care for their children and ensure they thrive.

Accordingly, we will:

- promote and drive increased early intervention supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and increased proportional investment in early intervention as compared to out-of-home care
- support and promote a priority to safely reunify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with their families wherever it is possible to do so.

Principle 6: Challenging systemic racism and inequities

We acknowledge that the current challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families result from a history of injustice and racism that remains embedded within the laws, policies and practices of our society, systems and institutions.

Accordingly, we will:

- take actions to ensure law, policy and practice are designed to respond to the root causes of poverty and disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- challenge racism where we see or experience it in laws, policies, procedures or behaviours.

We will enable this commitment by

This strategy is built on four key areas, or building blocks, that we will focus effort on to realise our outcome. We have identified several **supporting conditions**, or enablers, needed to achieve our building blocks. **These are:**

Focus on the child

Children are at the centre of everything we do. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are a growing part of Queensland's child population, and they must be supported as the parents, citizens and leaders of the future. Their interests must remain paramount, and their experiences and voices given priority in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.

Empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, families and communities

When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents are empowered and supported by services that are accessible, culturally respectful and safe, and the importance of culture and connection is deeply understood, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are more likely to thrive.⁸

Enable self-determination

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have the capacity and capabilities, with the right support, to enable families to safely care for their children. Research affirms the value of unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices, and the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions. We know that continuity of cultural identity is vital to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

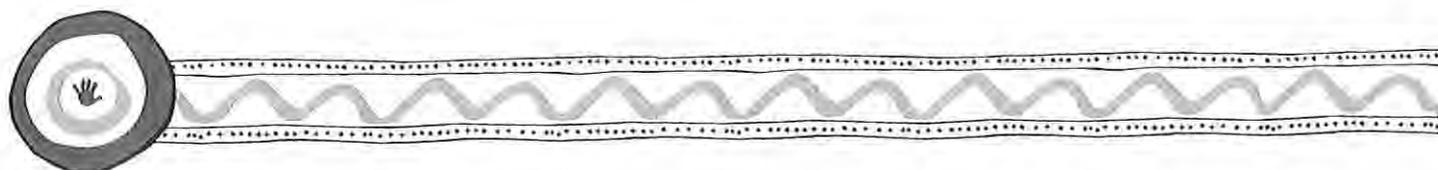
Evidence shows that the foundational element needed to achieve our shared hopes and aspirations is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' choice and self-determination. When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are given the opportunity to design, commission and deliver services in their communities, it is more likely these services will be culturally safe and responsive.

A more just and committed approach to close the gap in outcomes requires genuine actions to support self-determination.^{9, 10}

Set high expectations and positive norms

Expectations are more than just words. They are core beliefs that influence social norms and impact behaviours and decision-making. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have publicly highlighted the negative impact low expectations have on outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.¹¹

Setting and believing in high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can create a transformational shift in practice that improves outcomes for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.¹² To achieve change we must put in place a program that embeds high expectations in our systems and symbols and builds positive norms.



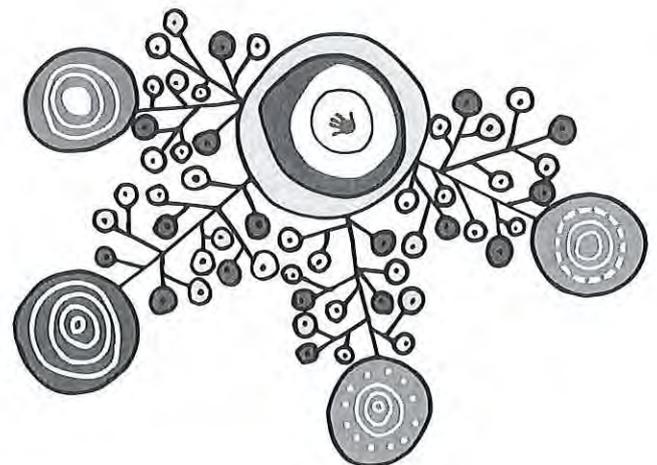


‘For Indigenous populations, the evidence shows that the single biggest factor in improving health and social outcomes is self-determination.

For self-determination to be effective, two things must occur — Indigenous peoples assume leadership, governance, authority over their lives and communities using a balance of traditional methods and contemporary realities (Aboriginal Terms of Reference), and develop their own vision of their futures.

Second, governments and non-government agencies admit that “business as usual”, with them in power and control, is a major part of the problem. They must be willing to change and give up some of that power and control.’

– Associate Professor Gregory Phillips 2016





Take a holistic and life-course approach

A child's early years are the ideal time to make the greatest impact on long-term wellbeing. Both positive and negative early life experiences shape children's health, learning, growth, relationships, safety, identity and culture. To ensure children develop well and flourish, identifying needs early and making sure the right support and services are available at the right time are critical.^{13,14,15,16} This approach must continue as children grow into young people and transition through life stages.

Recognise culture as a protective factor

Cultural connectedness is one of the best protective factors to keep children safe within their families. We trust that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are strongest in their cultures when connected to family, community and country. Long-term strategies must recognise and enable informal community and family networks that support children within their community.¹⁷

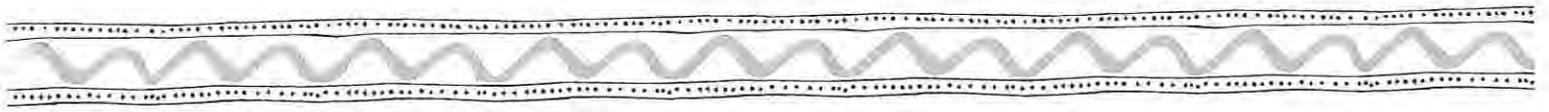
Address trauma and enable healing

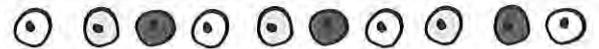
The trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a result of colonisation and past government policies has had a devastating effect on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities. To enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to move forward and heal, they must have responsibility for and control over the design, development and delivery of approaches that support their own healing.¹⁸

Share power, responsibility and accountability

Everyone has a role to play in keeping Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children safe, healthy, happy and thriving. This shared responsibility includes communities, governments, businesses and services. Services must be decided, designed and delivered in genuine partnership and through trust to ensure they are appropriate and meet the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families.

We acknowledge that there are times when some families and children will need help in a crisis and in some cases statutory child protection services will be required. During these times, it is critical that government and service providers appreciate the impact of harmful practices and policies of the past, focus on the current, and look to the future. All agencies and organisations must understand the full scope of the responsibility they have to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to prevent repeating similar patterns.





Shift and balance investment

The majority of current government investment in child and family support is concentrated on the tertiary child protection system. As quickly as possible, investment needs to be rebalanced with a greater share provided to universal and secondary services, with a particular focus on prevention and early intervention services. In addition, too little of the current investment goes to community-led or controlled organisations, which are best placed to determine, design and deliver services that will meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

Provide accessible and coordinated services

Integrated services represent a culturally appropriate way to provide for a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' needs and align to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' views of holistic health and wellbeing. Integration enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to navigate the system by linking individuals and families to services they need, when they need them. It gives families more control through greater choice and improved access to a range of services.¹⁹

Create partnerships

Genuine partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are essential. For these partnerships to be effective, we must work within a culturally competent framework, and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations in an authentic and collaborative way.

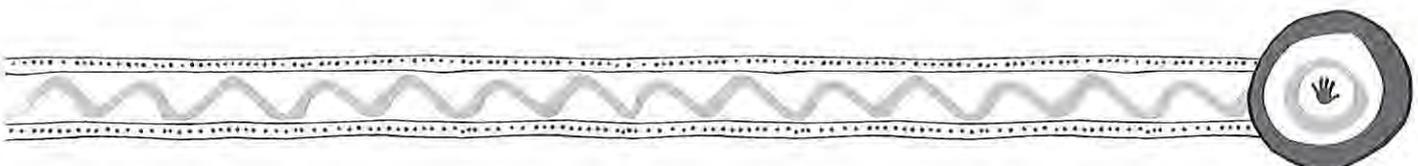
Innovate, build evidence and adjust

To lead best practice responses that are innovative and create sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' wellbeing, we must develop a contemporary awareness and deeper understanding of the ongoing inequity experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

It is vital that we listen to the knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community services to pursue innovative solutions and learn from what works. We must commit to action learning and continue to adapt our responses to meet changing needs.



We must remain committed and accountable to the long-term vision of the strategy and ensure that every action we take contributes to enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to lead solutions so their children grow up healthy and safe in family, community and culture.



We will build on other initiatives

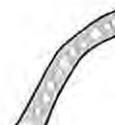
To achieve our vision and target, we must **align our strategy** and action plans **to the goals of other national and state initiatives and strategies**, and leverage their efforts.

At a **national** level, these include:

- Council of Australian Governments (COAG) *Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage*
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children Third Three Year Action Plan, 2015–18, *Driving Change: Intervening Early*
- *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010–2022*
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy*
- *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework*
- National Disability Insurance Scheme.

At the **state** level, implementation of this strategy and associated action plans will **build on** work underway through *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's child protection and family support reforms*, which is supported by a \$425 million investment over five years from 2014. This includes current and future initiatives:

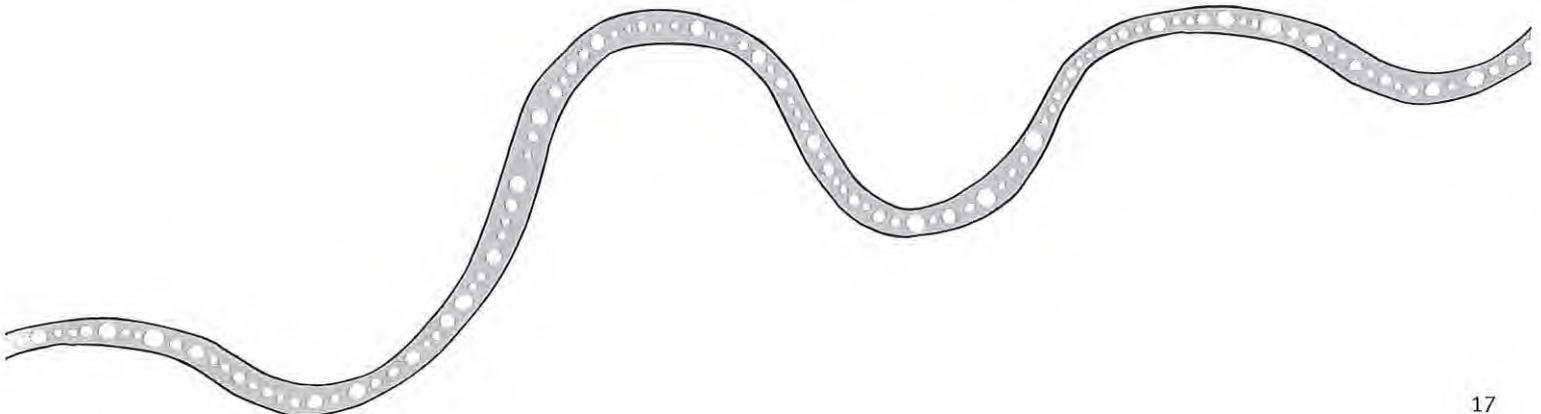
- increasing information and support to parents, grandparents and carers through the Queensland Family and Child Commission's (QFCC) *Talking Families* campaign
- empowering parents through universal access to the Queensland-based Triple P — Positive Parenting Program
- reviewing Queensland's child protection legislation
- establishing a Queensland-wide network of community-based service gateways — Family and Child Connect (FACC) services, which include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led FACCs
- building capacity through the Strengthening the Sector initiatives led by the QFCC
- investing more than ever before in community-based family support and intervention services
- auditing all children in out-of-home care and reforming out-of-home care
- strengthening engagement and advocacy so that children's voices and experiences are heard
- implementing specialist investigation, assessment and support teams in the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- strengthening child safety practice and practice leadership and reviewing departmental systems and the sector
- improving governance and oversight of the child protection system, including through the Child Protection Reform Leaders Group and the QFCC.





Implementation of this strategy and associated action plans will also **work together** with other Queensland Government strategies and initiatives, in particular:

- *Jobs Now, Jobs for the Future*
- *Moving Ahead: A strategic approach to increasing the participation of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland's economy 2016–2022*
- *Queensland Youth Strategy: Building young Queenslanders for a global future*
- Queensland housing strategy (to be released in 2017)
- *Every student succeeding: State Schools Strategy 2017–2021 and Advancing Education: An action plan for education in Queensland*
- *Deadly Kids, Deadly Futures: Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Ear and Hearing Health Framework 2016–2026*
- *Queensland Financial Inclusion Plan* to support improved financial literacy for families and enhance responses to financial hardship
- *Making Tracks toward closing the gap in health outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders by 2033*
- *Queensland Violence against Women Prevention Plan 2016–2022 and the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*
- *Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014–2019*
- *Queensland Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2015–2017*
- *Proud and Strong: Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan 2016–2018.*



We will deliver this through

Joint implementation

The strategy will be implemented through a series of action plans that will move us towards our vision over the next 20 years. We will take a flexible approach to developing future action plans based on the outcomes achieved, new challenges and priorities, emerging evidence, innovation and opportunities. Each action plan will continue to build our evidence base to inform future directions.

The **first action plan**, *Changing Tracks*, builds on the prevention and early intervention approach of *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's child protection and family support reforms*. It will be delivered over three years from 2017 to 2019 with discrete actions implemented over this time. The plan will focus on setting the foundations to place Queensland on a new track to achieve our vision and target by 2037.

The Family Matters Roadmap sets the foundation of intended outcomes for this strategy through the following sub-targets:

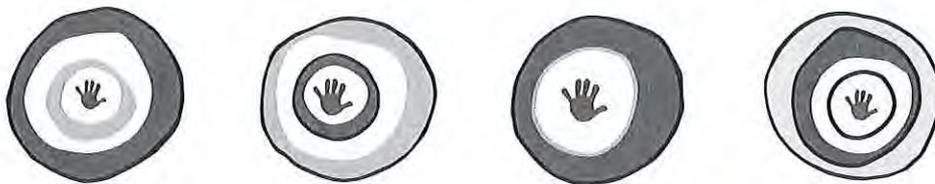
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enjoy equal access to early intervention and prevention services as non-Indigenous children by 2020
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care enjoy equal rates of reunification with their parents or family as non-Indigenous children by 2025
- Eliminate the over-representation in rates of notification of child abuse or neglect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2030
- Eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to a substantiation of child abuse or neglect by 2035
- Eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children subject to an order of removal into out-of-home care by 2035.²⁰

This implementation approach is designed to allow action learning to be incorporated into each action plan. In this way we can ensure we continue to reflect and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will determine our efforts and associated investment within an accountability framework that is agile, and evolves as we learn what works best for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

Each action plan will be implemented through a formal partnership agreement — the **Queensland First Children and Families Partnership Agreement** — which will be developed by representatives of Family Matters Queensland, the Queensland Government and relevant non-government organisations. This partnership agreement will detail the specific obligations and responsibilities of community and government in delivering the actions and meeting the outcomes described in the strategy and action plans. The Australian Government will be invited to be a party to the agreement, and other organisations will also be encouraged to commit.



We can only succeed in realising *Our Way* with the support, commitment and action of all Queenslanders, organisations and communities, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous, who directly or indirectly touch the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.



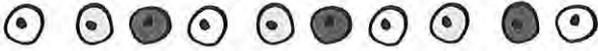
Joint governance

In recognition of the enabling principle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and decision-making, this strategy will be implemented within a robust accountability framework led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As a priority, we will establish a **Queensland First Children and Families Board**, which will include representatives from the Queensland Government, Family Matters Queensland and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The majority of members will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Investment decisions will be carefully considered in partnership with the Queensland First Children and Families Board with a focus on impact and value.

The board will guide the implementation of the strategy, and inform the evaluation of its impact and effectiveness. This will ensure the application of a cultural perspective, and keep government and partners accountable to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



Shared accountability

To ensure we remain accountable to the vision and target of the strategy, and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we will measure the progress and change being made in the lives of children and families as a result of the initiatives outlined in each action plan.

Reporting

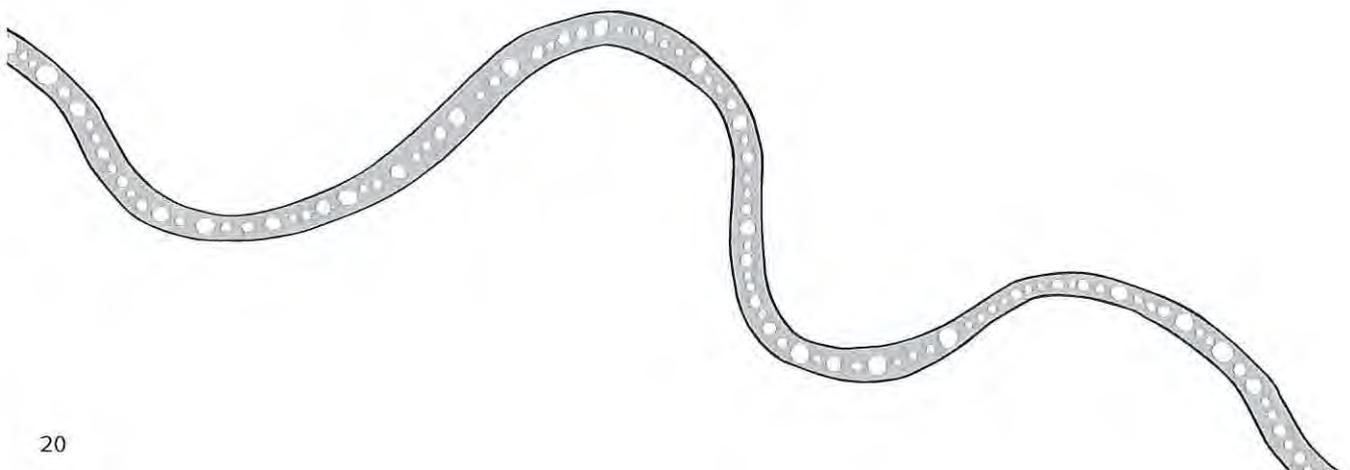
A **publicly available report** will be produced annually for the Queensland Cabinet and national Family Matters, and will act as a report card of the progress in achieving our targets.

A governance and accountability framework led by the board will ensure the strategy and action plans are responsive to the needs of the Queensland Government and community and reflect the Family Matters partnership. The board will also report quarterly to the Minister for Child Safety and the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.

An **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Outcomes Framework** will be developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, communities and organisations as part of the first action plan. It will be a whole-of-government and cross-sectoral tool to identify outcomes, indicators and measures to inform investment decisions, align efforts and help track progress.

Evaluation

The board will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to **evaluate the strategy and action plans**. The QFCC will support the board to design the evaluation and monitoring framework, aligned to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Outcomes Framework. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will evaluate the strategy and action plans to ensure the evaluation is culturally informed.



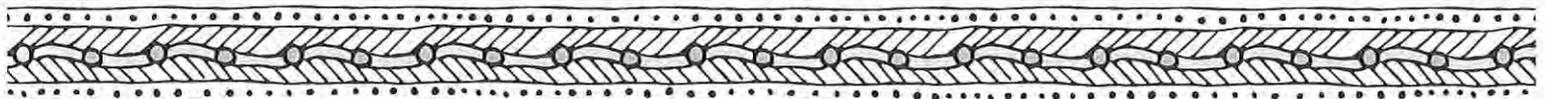
Appendix 1

What we heard

This strategy and first action plan are informed by the voices of more than 800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from across Queensland, plus other stakeholders with an interest in improving the life outcomes of Queensland's most vulnerable children.

We conducted a range of consultation activities over 18 months. We heard that we need to:

- recognise that connection to culture, country and kin are primary protective and resilience factors
- value and trust that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is best placed to determine how to meet the needs of their children, families and communities
- support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to focus on prevention and early intervention, early childhood development, young parents and life-stage transitions
- have a shared vision and commitment to a strategy and to work in partnership
- ensure the enabling environment is facilitated through sound legislation, policy, practice and procedures that align all agencies involved in providing child and family support services, and promotes multi-agency collaboration
- have good governance at the community, service provider, and government levels
- empower communities to develop and implement strong governance arrangements and effective community development and service delivery capabilities
- provide children and families with the right support services necessary to meet their needs at the right time
- move language from negative and deficit based to positive and strengths focused in the action plan
- invest in culture
- acknowledge community and cultural strength, and enable communities to provide their own solutions
- value and support cultural connectedness
- support a child to form and maintain relationships with culture and community through improved engagement with families
- continue on our journey to improve family support as one way to support child wellbeing
- share power
- continue to build skills and capacity to ensure more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are in leadership roles.



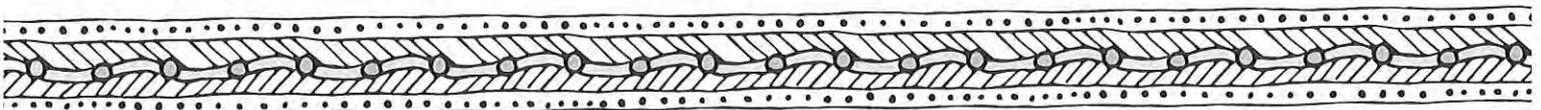
Appendix 2

Family Matters — Strong communities. Strong culture. Stronger children

National Family Matters and Family Matters Queensland are part of an historic campaign led by more than 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations across Australia who are committed to eliminating the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in statutory out-of-home care, within a generation.

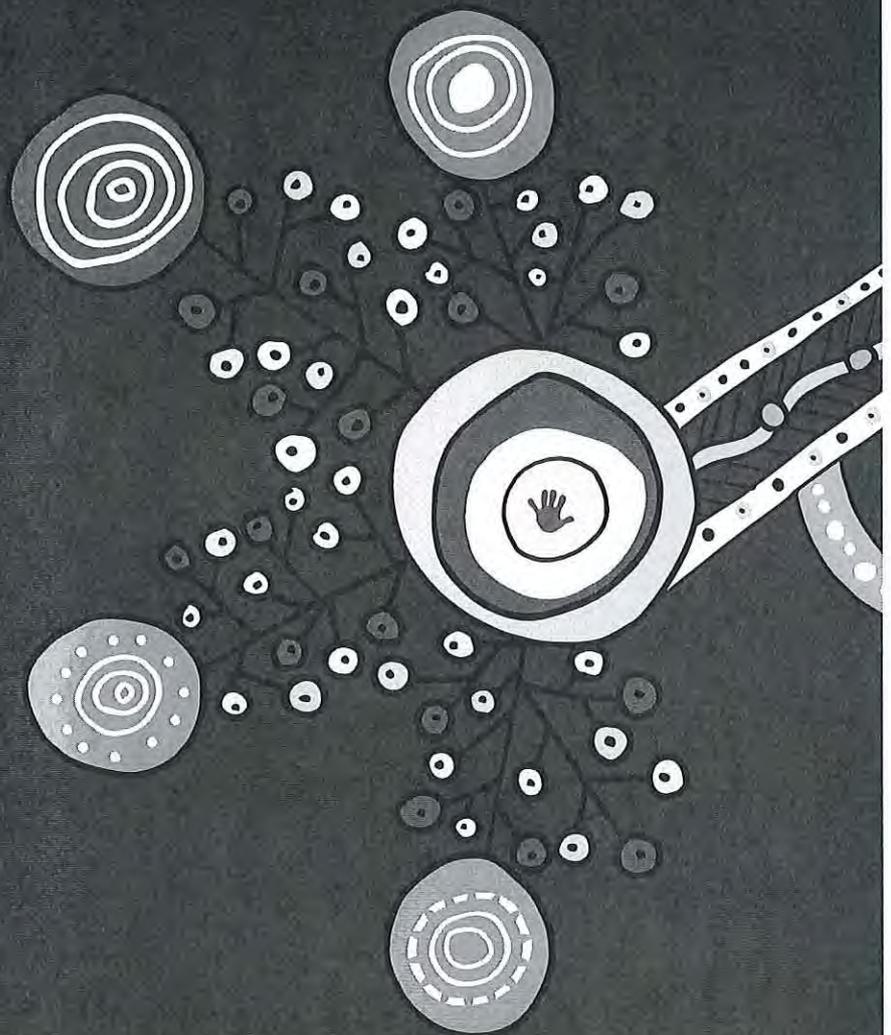
The Family Matters campaign in Queensland focuses on creating evidence-informed solutions to better enable family strengthening and children's wellbeing, and re-orientate service delivery from crisis intervention to prevention.

For more information visit www.familymatters.org.au



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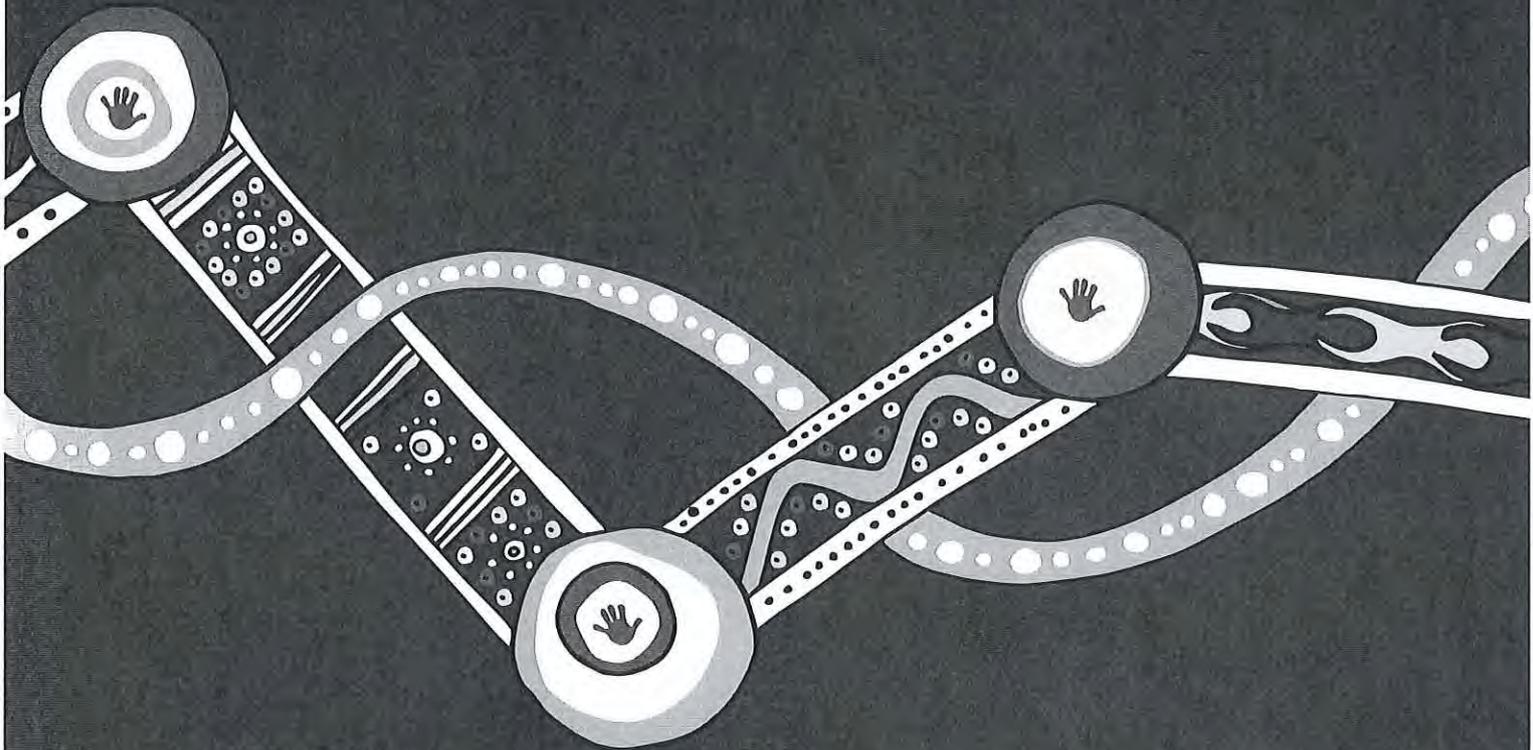
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Story of the motif

The motif artwork was created by Rachael Sarra, an Indigenous artist and designer from creative agency Gilimbaa. Rachael originates from the Bunda People in Goreng Goreng country.

The motif design is a reflection of equal partners joining together in conversation and positive action. It represents a clear and focused pathway that began as the dispersed energy of many that has now fused to channel clarity, momentum, and strength. It shows the power of unity and simplicity that evolves from complexity. The artwork shows the journey of the child, depicted as the hands, connected to and supported by structures that nurture and guide. Through the woven orange line it acknowledges culture, kin and the strength of learning from the past to act in the present and grow for the future.



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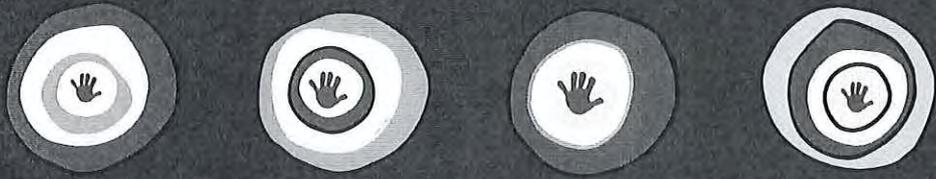
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COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

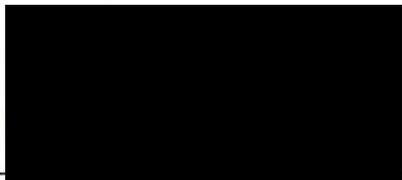
PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

A/CHIEF PRACTITIONER, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY

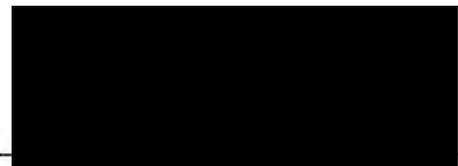
**Annexure 2 – Yangga Dahgu – Makem Gen (Reframing the Relationship
Roadmap)**

This and the preceding 28 pages is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 2” in the statement of Victoria Van Houdt dated 5 September 2025.



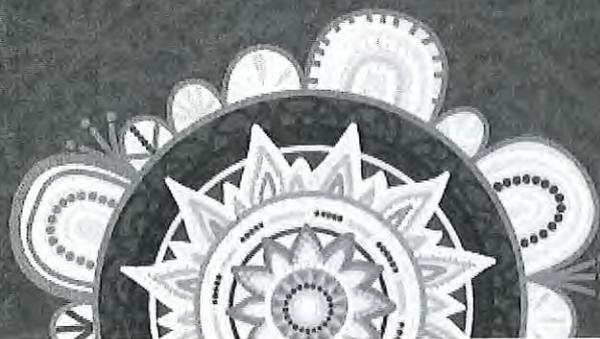
Victoria Van Houdt



Witness

Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen

Reframing the Relationship Roadmap





Acknowledgment of Peoples and Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians in the State of Queensland. We acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land, seas, waters, air and resources for more than 60,000 years, prior to the British colonisation of Queensland.

We acknowledge the colonisation of Queensland occurred without the consent of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and often against their active resistance. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples assert they have never ceded their sovereignty over their lands, seas, waters, air and resources and they continue to assert their sovereignty, and recognise that colonisation has had a devastating, and ongoing, impact on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as two unique and diverse peoples made up of many distinct communities and groups, each with their own unique laws, traditions, languages, culture, and traditional knowledge. The process of truth-telling will help inform the Queensland community generally and help heal the trauma suffered by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples because of colonisation. The process will inform treaty negotiations between Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and the State highlighting the resilience, enduring culture, law/lore and knowledge of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, demonstrating how these strengths are priceless assets for Queensland.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present as well as the existing and emerging leaders who walk together in partnership on this journey. We particularly pay respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within our organisation, whose persistence and resilience is evident every day in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and with non-Indigenous staff, to make a difference.

Drawn from the Path to Treaty Act 2023



The origin of Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen

Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen means 'working together to make it again'.

In Yuggera language *Yangga Dahgu* (young – ga darr – goo) means 'working together' and in Torres Strait Islander Yumpla Tok *Mekem Gen* (Mec – em – gen) means 'make it again'.

The combination of these words in language have been chosen as they represent an acknowledgment of the two distinct broader cultural groups of both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

While the department acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal languages across Queensland, many of its leaders live and work on the country of the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples and it is the responsibility of those leaders to create the necessary change to reframe our relationship.

Yangga Dahgu reflects the need for the department to work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to create a reframed relationship. *Mekem Gen* reflects the generosity, strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their willingness to continue to guide the department on our journey to a reframed relationship.



The motif

We acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal artist and Gilimbaa designer Jenna Lee. Jenna is a descendant of the Larrakia people (NT).

The motif was created as a symbol and visual narrative of the department's and communities' collective strategy, commitment, journey and vision to ensure First Nations peoples' cultural identity, diversity and richness are central to decisions made with regard to children, families and communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have gathered around fires as communities for over 60,000 years to pass down knowledge and share stories.

At the heart of the department's motif is a fire representing people coming together, gathering in warmth and safety. As more gather, the flames grow brighter and stronger, fueled by the exchange of stories, knowledge and understanding, of each other and individually in self-determination.

Surrounding the fire is a dark layer of charcoal and smoke, acknowledging the trauma experienced by individuals, families and communities, as well as centuries of strength and resilience. The charcoal and smoke also represent both traditional and contemporary healing for communities and a symbol of the importance of the continuation of culture and cultural practice.

The final layer is the vibrant new growth, representing new beginnings for individuals, families and communities through safety, understanding, self-determination, resilience and healing.



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Message from the Director-General

In August 2022, the Queensland Government reaffirmed its commitment to a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders through the Path to Treaty journey. In May 2023, the *Path to Treaty Act 2023* was assented to establish the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry and the First Nations Institute to facilitate a truth-telling and healing process. When committing to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is critical to reflect on current programs, services, systems and processes and to identify the skills and resources necessary to reframe the relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To understand our department's treaty-readiness, we began our own truth-telling process, rightfully led by our department's First Nations Council. Throughout this process, the department began the journey of learning and reflection, identifying and understanding the cultural, policy, program, structural and workforce related issues and barriers to treaty, and identifying the individual and organisational shift required to do things differently, to reframe our relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Together with the Board of Management, the First Nations Council led a process of respectful engagement with staff, to build an understanding of the Queensland Government's commitment to a reframed relationship, and to reflect on what this department needs to do to be treaty-ready and to inform this department's journey towards a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities.

I would like to thank the many staff who participated in these conversations, for truthfully sharing their perspectives and views, and what they believe we need to do to be better positioned to reframe our relationship with First Nations staff, families and communities, to engage in Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry processes with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. These important and often challenging conversations have informed the development of *Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)*. The Reframing the Relationship Roadmap (Roadmap) identifies significant individual, as well as organisational priority areas for this department to reframe the relationship with First Nations peoples. Key priority areas of focus identified in the Roadmap include – developing strong culturally responsive leadership; growing our individual and collective knowledge of past and continuing impacts of government intervention in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; addressing systemic bias, institutional and direct racism and lateral violence; building a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and a culturally capable non-Indigenous workforce; privileging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service provision; and strengthening the department's accountability, cultural governance and oversight.

I would also like to thank the First Nations Council for steering the direction of this work with their guidance, honesty, insights, and commitment to identifying areas for action; and for providing a future visioning, of what we, as a treaty-ready department will look like through the drafting of the department's Reframing the Relationship Statement of Commitment (Statement of Commitment). In drafting the Statement of Commitment, the First Nations Council have asked us to think about 'how we get to the dreaming'. I ask that you accept this gift from the First Nations Council members and turn your hearts and minds to help achieving the aspirations outlined in this future visioning statement.

The Roadmap, together with the Statement of Commitment, will guide the department in its journey to build on existing Queensland Government initiatives and investment including *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037*, and provide a framework to begin the significant organisational and individual change required to reframe the department's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

Message from First Nations Council

As this department begins its path to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the First Nations Council would like to acknowledge the department's executive leadership, in particular Deidre Mulkerin, Director-General and the Board of Management for being clear and intentional that this process will be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We thank the executive leadership for their confidence in guiding the department on this journey.

As we consider the question of 'what it means to reframe the relationship', it's important to acknowledge that for more than 60,000 years Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have had systems of Customary Lore that defined what caring for the young and old looked like. Unfortunately, this knowledge has been displaced and undermined by systems and or practice that did not see or even hear us, that failed and at times continues to fail us by the inability to recognise the intergenerational impacts of trauma and grief. This is why the Statement of Commitment specifically notes truth-telling as one of the key things we need to reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, community-controlled organisations and peak organisations.

It is now time to develop strong culturally responsive leadership, strengthen the individual and collective knowledge of past and continuing colonial impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, work through a trauma-informed practice model, address systemic bias, institutional racism, and lateral violence, build a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and a culturally capable non-Indigenous workforce to support and improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families and communities.

Together the Statement of Commitment and *Yangga Dahgu — Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)* provide the opportunity for this department to look toward a new future where the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are recognised and valued, and rarely challenged. Together we can reframe our thinking and work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, to recognise and celebrate what they do well, and celebrate the important role they play in the lives of children, young people, people with disability and older peoples.

Deidre Mulkerin

Director-General
Department of Child Safety, Seniors
and Disability Services

Ron Weatherall

Chair
First Nations Council



Executive summary

To prepare the department to reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, a project team was established in November 2022, overseen by the First Nations Council (FNC) and the Board of Management (BOM), to develop a:

- *Reframing the Relationship Statement of Commitment*, which maps a preferred future state of treaty-readiness for the department.
- *Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)* which outlines high level priority areas for action to support the department to reframe its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

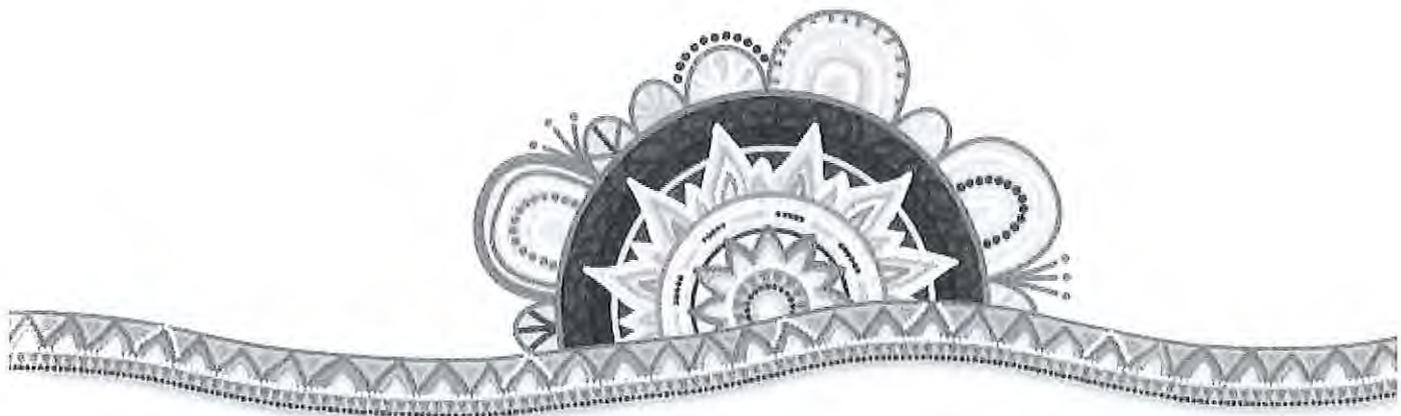
To inform the Roadmap, the project team undertook an extensive, statewide internal consultation process, which included 145 engagement sessions attended by 2,745 participants. Issues raised by staff during these sessions include:

- Limited knowledge of the past history and continuing impact of the department, its predecessors and government on Queensland's First Nations' children, carers, people with disability and older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families.
- Systemic bias and racism.
- Cultural safety and culturally safe workplaces.
- The development and implementation of culturally responsive legislation, policy, programs, services, practice and systems.
- The ad hoc implementation of policy into practice.
- Concerns about power and control (doing things for or to, rather than with).
- Limited respect for the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Leadership and accountability.

The issues raised by staff provide the necessary starting point to support the department's planning and provides an insight into the significant individual and organisational change needed to begin to redefine and reframe the department's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, community-controlled organisations and peak organisations.

The *Statement of Commitment* and *Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)* prescribes a new way for staff to work more efficiently and effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders as a key strategic priority guided by key principles as outlined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, the *Public Sector Act 2022* and the *Human Rights Act 2019* including:

- recognising and honouring Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Queensland
- engaging in truth-telling about the shared history of all Australians
- recognising the importance to Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to self-determination
- promoting cultural safety and cultural capability
- working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' to actively promote, include and act in a way that aligns with their perspectives, in particular when making decisions directly affecting them
- ensuring the workforce and leadership are reflective of the community they serve.





Reframing the Relationship Statement of Commitment

In August 2022, the Queensland Government together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders committed to a reframed relationship with First Nation's peoples of Queensland through the signing of *Queensland's Path to Treaty Commitment* with a focus on Truth-Telling and Healing.

Considering this commitment, and with the guidance of the First Nations Council, the department commits to reframing its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by/through:

- Acknowledging the intergenerational impacts and trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the intersectionality impacting upon children, young people, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families as a result of the departments' historical and contemporary practices including forced removals.
- Engaging in local truth telling and healing processes with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as appropriate.
- Acknowledging and reaffirming the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to be safe, to be treated equally and respectfully, and be free from discrimination based on their cultural origin or identity.
- Acknowledging and upholding the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, to be included in all decisions that impact them.
- Committing to doing and being better in the future, alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, families, and communities, in equal and genuine high expectation partnerships and relationships, to ensure the best outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and undertaking measurable actions to achieve this change.
- Addressing the power imbalance between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and the department by delegating the available child protection powers and functions of the departmental chief executive to the chief executive of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation.

- Ensuring all policies, programs, practices, business systems and decision-making processes are not biased against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families.
- Challenging the assumptions that underpin the continuing disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the child protection system.
- Engaging in trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices to address and heal the legacy of intergenerational impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Leadership accepting an individual and collective responsibility to develop, support and maintain the reframed relationship.
- Valuing, respecting, and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and cultural knowledge.
- Ensuring that all workplaces are culturally safe, free from any discrimination, and supportive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

We look forward to a new future where the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, families and communities are recognised and valued, and rarely challenged.

We look forward to reframing our thinking and working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, to recognise and celebrate what they do well, and to acknowledge the important role they play in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, people with disability, and older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.





Reframing the relationship — what did our staff tell us?

Approach to consultation to inform *Yangga Dahgu — Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)*

Between November 2022 and early August 2023, the project team delivered 145 plus engagements across the department (and the former Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs) portfolios with approximately 2,745 participants.

Conversations were focused on:

- providing opportunities for staff to reflect on what reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders means for them individually and collectively as part of the broader department
- how the business may need to change.

These engagements and conversations have informed the development of the Roadmap and internal truth-telling and healing planning processes.

The project team utilised a range of tools to frame planning discussions and to identify key priority areas for action, including the 2023 Working for Queensland results as it relates to workforce issues including:

- cultural safety
- racism and discrimination
- recruitment and career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Engagement sessions were held across the state. First Nations-focused conversations, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were held centrally and regionally to ensure the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Findings

The project team analysed over 4,600 plus responses received from participants who attended face-to-face and online consultations.

All senior leadership teams across the portfolio areas attended these sessions.

From these conversations several themes emerged including what significant individual and organisational changes may be required to reframe the department's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This included:

- acknowledging the historic and contemporary impacts of government and departmental intervention in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- incorporating culturally responsive policy into practice
- incorporating a stronger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice and lens across the department's policies, programs and regulatory responsibilities

- 
- all decisions need to include and reflect a First Nations voice (this includes case management)
 - leaders need to demonstrate cultural awareness, humility and responsiveness
 - strengthening relationships and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, as well as organisations
 - building the cultural capability of staff.

Governance and reporting

The Roadmap is an evolving document, which recognises and builds on the strength of our existing staff, initiatives and partnerships. Implementation of the Roadmap will take a collaborative approach that invites and encourages the participation of all staff, recognises and listens to the expertise and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and seeks staff input on opportunities for involvement.

The Roadmap will be staged over three years and overseen by the FNC and BOM.

Respective lead areas of the department will support the implementation, ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation of the Roadmap and it will be a standing agenda item on both the Child and Family Strategy and Performance Committee and the Disability Reform Oversight Group. Executive leaders across the department will be responsible for driving the individual and organisational change required and reporting on progress through these two oversight groups.

Updates on the progress and implementation of the Roadmap will be regularly provided to the Queensland Public Sector Commission through the annual reporting required under the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

Alignment with national and state agendas

The Roadmap and Statement of Commitment aligns with *Queensland's Path to Treaty Commitment* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework* and delivers the department's obligations to publish a 'reframing the relationship plan' as required under the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

Implementation of the Roadmap will contribute to the delivery of Queensland's commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the Queensland Government's *Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–2025*, *Cultural Capability Action Plan 2023–2024* and *Our Way: A generational Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037* currently being delivered through the *Breaking Cycles action plan 2023–2025*.

Additionally, the Roadmap reflects the protection, promotion and respect of human rights in decision making, action and implementation, in accordance with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Human Rights Act 2019* and the *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Strategy 2020–2040, Leading Healing Our Way*.



Roadmap priority areas for action

Queensland's Path to Treaty Commitment and the recently amended *Public Sector Act 2022*, requires each government entity to develop a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. To develop a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, community-controlled organisations and peak bodies requires a fundamental shift in individual and departmental values and beliefs to demonstrate the following key principles as outlined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, the *Public Sector Act 2022*, and the *Human Rights Act 2019* including:

- recognising and honouring Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Queensland
- engaging in truth-telling about the shared history of all Australians
- recognising the importance of Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to self-determination
- promoting cultural safety and cultural capability
- working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to actively promote, include and act in a way that aligns with their perspectives, in particular when making decisions directly affecting them
- ensuring the workforce and leadership are reflective of the community they serve.

Engagement processes identified that building individual cultural capability is required across the department, to support staff at all levels, particularly across the leadership, to build the skills required to reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, community-controlled organisations and peak organisations.

The Roadmap is informed by staff input and the 2023 *Working for Queensland Survey* results, as set out against the following six individual and organisational domains:

- Values and beliefs.
- Knowledge and understanding.
- Workforce/workplace capability.
- Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Policy development and service delivery.
- Structural considerations.

Values and beliefs

In line with *Queensland's Path to Treaty Commitment* and the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the Roadmap establishes a new strategic priority for this department to develop a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This means reframing the relationship with staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and families, community-controlled organisations and peak bodies, to be a leading culturally capable organisation.



“Employ people who affirm our values and beliefs if you want to work in an organisation like ours.”

Central Office Staff

“Shift values into actual behaviours. Test and assess them.”

Regional Staff

“Work in genuine partnerships with First Nations peoples.”

Regional Staff

Values and beliefs

Objectives	Governance mechanisms, systems, policies, processes and procedures across all department business areas drive and reflect the values and beliefs needed for a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.
Strategies	The department will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a culturally aware, job ready workforce at all levels through the co-design and implementation of training and professional development consistent with the requirements in the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> and the <i>Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan July 2023 – June 2025</i> that identifies and promotes the individual skills and capabilities to create a reframed relationship within a culturally capable organisation. • Include specific activities and accountability measures relating to cultural capability and cultural supervision in position descriptions, individual achievement capability planning and performance agreements.
Outcomes	A reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, families, community-controlled organisations and peak bodies.



Knowledge and understanding



"Open your hearts. Listen to recent history. We'll take you on a journey."
 First Nations Council member

"There is no knowledge of local histories, of missions. Go out sensitively. Know how this knowledge supports trauma-informed practice."
 First Nations Council member

"We need to have truth-telling conversations and then act on the specific trauma that is raised during those discussions.... engaging all staff to understand the impact of the past but also the impact we still have through conversations, that can make or break a family."
 Regional Officer

Knowledge and understanding

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in formal Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry processes. • Increase staff knowledge and understanding of the department's historical and contemporary impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. • Support the health and wellbeing of all staff during the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry process and beyond.
Strategies	<p>The department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a whole-of-department working group to undertake Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry planning and readiness processes including change management and a communication strategy in preparation for the formal Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry process and beyond. • Enhance staff knowledge and understanding of the historical and contemporary impacts of the department on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reviewing and updating cultural training initiatives including Starting the Journey – developing and implementing face-to-face cultural training strategies and products. • Ensure health and wellbeing services have the capacity to support individuals and teams during formal Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry processes and beyond.

Knowledge and understanding

Outcomes

- The department actively participates in the formal Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry process and support government commitments to implement recommendations of the Inquiry.
- Staff have a broad knowledge and understanding of the intergenerational impacts and trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families, including those with a disability and those who are older, as a result of the department's historical and contemporary practices including forced removals.
- The health and wellbeing of all staff is actively supported during the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry.

Workforce/workplace capability



"What we bring as First Nations people is experience."

First Nations Council member

"Your career path doesn't progress by being the door mat, but by being the door itself."

First Nations Council member

"Identified staff have cultural authority. Often staff are respected in the community but are not respected in Child Safety Service Centres. We need to be respectful of authority."

First Nations Council member

"I'm learning you. Call me when there is a spot fire. Call me when there is a campfire. But don't call me when there is an inferno".

Cultural Practice Advisor



Workforce/workplace capability

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a culturally capable and trauma-informed workforce. • Build a viable and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. • All staff have a broad appreciation, knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' local history, perspectives and priorities. • Create culturally safe and respectful workplaces. • Develop culturally responsive leadership, service delivery and practice. • Establish a work environment where anti-racism is the norm.
Strategies	<p>The department will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local cultural induction packages are developed and implemented at place, in partnership with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. • As a minimum, it establishes employment targets and pathways to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at all levels within and across the department in line with the <i>Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan July 2023 – June 2025</i> and the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i>. • It develops and implements a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – contemporary model of cultural supervision for all staff – cultural safety policy and program – strategy and/or processes to recognise and address lateral violence in the workplace – cultural mentoring program and a cultural capability assessment and review framework for senior executives. • Develop and implement an anti-racism framework.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across all levels of the organisation, consistent with the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i>. • All staff have completed local cultural induction, at place. • All workplaces are culturally safe, free from any discrimination, and supportive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, including their cultural knowledge, perspectives and values. • The human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to be safe, to be treated equally and respectfully, and be free from discrimination based on their cultural origin or identity is valued and upheld. • The workforce values, respects and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and cultural knowledge.

Relationships



"Have trust in our community-controlled orgs, to support our families, to deliver better outcomes."

Regional Officer

"When there is a great rapport with government, NGOs, community, Elders have knowledge of who is who, understand the different roles we play and how we work together."

Regional Officer

"Listen and be respectful of family plans."

Regional Officer

"Proactively and respectfully hear the voices of First Nations people. Want to work alongside and not against the cultural decisions that First Nations people offer."

Regional Officer

Relationships

Objectives

- Establish, across all levels of the organisation, respectful and high expectation relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:
 - staff
 - children, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, families and communities
 - funded community-controlled organisations and peak bodies.



Relationships	
Strategies	<p>The department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the cultural insights and advice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff inform all decision-making processes, departmental policies, programs and practice frameworks. • Ensure all policies, programs and services are co-designed, developed and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and community-controlled organisations. • Build, strengthen and maintain relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and partners (at the local, regional and statewide levels). • Support individuals to participate in the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry processes by providing improved and comprehensive access to individual records. • In partnership with other departments, work with the Government Treaty-Readiness Committee to develop a multiagency approach to service delivery that is trauma-informed and places the client at the centre of the service response. • Include the voices, perspectives and views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and/or organisations as part of the department's performance review processes including operational performance reviews and other relevant performance assessment mechanisms.
Outcomes	<p>The department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies, programs, services and practice frameworks are co-designed, developed and delivered in partnership with the FNC, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, peoples, communities, peak bodies and/or organisations. • Value, respect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and cultural knowledge. • Acknowledge and reaffirm the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to self-determination, to be safe, to be treated equally and respectfully and be free from discrimination based on their cultural origin or identity. • Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities actively participate in decisions that affect them.

Policy and service delivery



"When we are treaty-ready, leaders will be open to changing the way they do things."

Regional Officer

"It is time to enter into Path to Treaty by mobilising what we already have (for example), Independent persons; Family Participation Program; Child Placement Principle."

Central Office Officer

"We gotta get our house into order. What are we doing with what we have in our heads and in our control? We need to take the tools out of the toolshed and use them."

On putting policies into practice –
Central Office Officer

"It's no good writing these songs if no one is going to use them."

On putting policies into practice –
Central Office Officer

Policy and service delivery

Objectives

- All systems, policy, programs, services, and practice are culturally responsive and meet the needs and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- The department privileges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled service provision.



Policy and service delivery	
Strategies	<p>The department will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and amend current systems, policies, programs, practice and legislation to ensure they are unbiased and culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. • Co-design and develop an investment and commissioning blueprint to support the transition of funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. • Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – co-design, develop and deliver policies, programs and services to meet their needs and priorities – review and evaluate effectiveness and outcomes of the above. • Develop and report on a place-based performance framework that assesses how the perspectives, views and input of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented in the development and application of legislation, policies and procedures.
Outcomes	<p>The department will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All systems, processes, policies, programs and practice are unbiased and culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. • Development of a co-designed approach to transitioning funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations. • The right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to actively participate in decisions that impact them is clearly evident in the day-to-day operations of the department.

Structural considerations



“There is a lot of variation in relation to cultural performance across the state. This variation is reflective of the maturity of the service centre and how it prioritises its responsiveness to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There are pockets where more than another ‘training session’ is going to be needed to help the service move forward. Staff don’t know what they don’t know and so conversations have to be had about ‘how to make people see what best practice is for First Nations families, what it’s like?’ It’s an opportunity to identify blind spots. It requires a strong outcomes focus.”

Central Office Officer

“You need to ask yourself, what can ‘I’ do to support this agency to be treaty-ready?”

Regional Executive Director

“We need less noddies, and more doies.”

First Nations Council Member

Structural considerations

Objectives

- Align with the whole-of-government approach to incorporate the principles of Indigenous data sovereignty and governance in day-to-day operations.
- Address the power imbalance between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and the department.
- Address systemic bias and institutional racism.
- Strengthen cultural governance, oversight and accountability.
- Strengthen the authorising environment of frontline staff to implement existing culturally responsive service delivery and practice.
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices into decision making structures and processes.



Structural considerations

Strategies

The department will:

- Continue to expand and develop through technology, policy and legislation, with an initial focus on Unify, providing data to the community-controlled sector, and to review processes to achieve data sovereignty.
- Scale up the statewide implementation of delegated authority through the implementation of *Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming systems and practice by making decisions our way*.
- Review and amend existing departmental systems, tools and processes to eliminate systemic bias and institutional racism.
- Review existing departmental governance mechanisms to align with the principles of *Reframing the Relationship* under *The Public Sector Act 2022* (section 22).
- Develop and implement an agreed standard of culturally responsive service delivery and practice and assess all staff in the application of this standard through a behavioural indicator framework.
- Report on how it establishes and maintains high expectation relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities at all levels.

Outcomes

The department ensures:

- The principles of Indigenous data sovereignty and governance align with the whole-of-government approach and state government position.
- An increase in the number of sites/organisations and delegations delivered under *Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming systems and practice by making decisions our way*.
- Departmental systems and processes are free from systemic bias and/or institutional racism.
- Equal and genuine high expectation partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities at all levels, to ensure best outcomes.



Appendix 1: Phased approach to the implementation of Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen

Vision

Path to Treaty is a journey to a reframed relationship and shared future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and the Queensland Government will work collaboratively to move towards truth, healing and treaty making.

Principles

The department will be guided by key principles as outlined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, the *Public Sector Act 2022* and the *Human Rights Act 2019* including:

- recognising and honouring Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Queensland
- engaging in truth-telling about the shared history of all Australians
- recognising the importance of Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to self-determination
- promoting cultural safety and cultural capability
- working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to actively promote, include and act in a way that aligns with their perspectives, in particular when making decisions directly affecting them
- ensuring the workforce and leadership are reflective of the community they serve.

Approach

November 2022 – August 2023

- Establish a dedicated team within the department.
- Develop a Statement of Commitment.
- Develop the Roadmap.

August 2023 – July 2024

- Launch the Statement of Commitment and the Roadmap.
- Establish an advisory group, of respective lead areas of the department, to develop implementation plans for the Reframed Relationship Roadmap, and to subsequent ongoing monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms.
- Implement, monitor and review the Roadmap.
- Develop a cultural safety policy and program for the department including a process to recognise and address lateral violence in the workplace.
- Development of a culturally responsive leadership capability assessment and review framework.



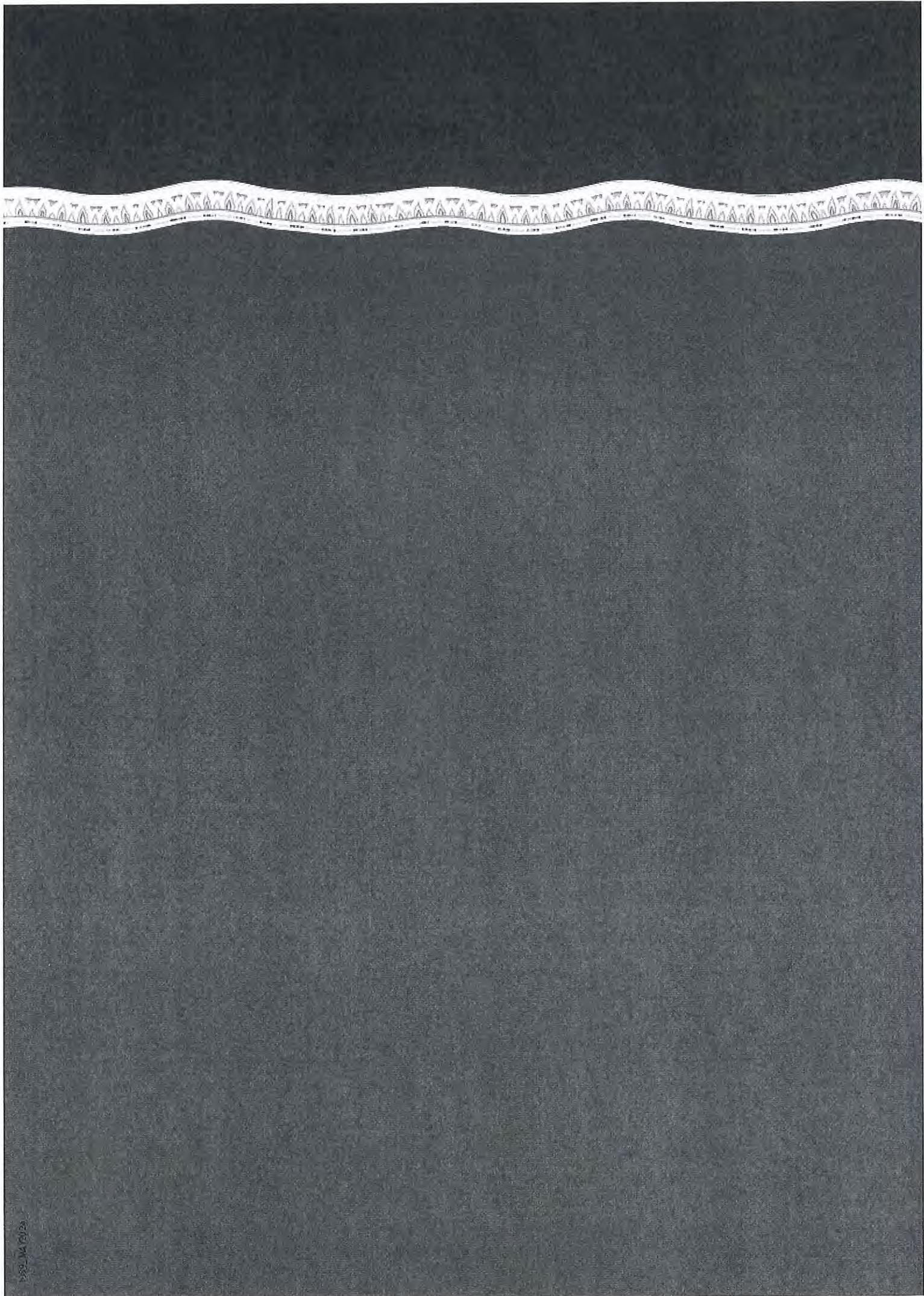
- Development of local cultural induction packages at place in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.
- Respond to the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry, as required.

July 2024 – July 2025

- Implement a staged approach to cultural supervision for all staff and a cultural mentoring program.
- Respond to the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry, as required.

July 2025 – July 2026

- Develop a co-designed approach to transitioning funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.
- Respond to the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry, as required.



COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

**A/CHIEF PRACTITIONER, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY**

**Annexure 3 – Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Employees Policy**

This and the preceding 11 pages is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 3” in the statement of Victoria Van Houdt dated 5 September 2025.



Victoria Van Houdt



Witness



POLICY

Title: Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees

Policy No: HR111-01

1. Policy Statement:

- 1.1. The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the department) is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy, safe and supportive work environment for all employees.
- 1.2. The department recognises and understands Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees have the right to a culturally safe work environment and strives to eradicate discrimination and racism from our workplaces.
- 1.3. The department acknowledges cultural safety requirements are different for all employees. This requires open respectful dialogues to support and meet the individual cultural safety needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.
- 1.4. The department recognises the cultural knowledge and values the significant contributions by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees within the workplace.

2. Principles:

- 2.1. The department is committed to fostering an environment where:
 - 2.1.1. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees feel heard, safe, valued, respected, supported and have a voice; and
 - 2.1.2. All departmental employees must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, perspectives, intergenerational impacts and how to respectfully implement practices that recognises cultural safety in the workplace; and
 - 2.1.3. Responsibility for creating and maintaining culturally safe workplaces is shared across all levels of the department.
- 2.2. The department is committed to upholding positive obligations set out within the *Human Rights Act 2019* (HR Act) and *Public Sector Act 2022* (PS Act), as they relate to cultural safety.
- 2.3. Behaviours that undermine cultural safety, such as but not limited to bullying, harassment, lateral violence, racism or unreasonable behaviour, will not be tolerated by the department.
- 2.4. The department thoughtfully and respectfully listens to all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees, as their voices and contributions are valued and recognised.
- 2.5. Cultural safety is about:
 - 2.5.1. shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge.
 - 2.5.2. the experience of learning together with dignity and actively truly listening.
 - 2.5.3. strategic planning to remove barriers to the optimal health, wellbeing and safety of

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. This includes addressing unconscious bias, racism and discrimination and supporting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees self-determination.

- 2.5.4. taking into account Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspectives as part of the design and development processes to lessen potential negative impacts for the design, delivery and evaluation of services for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.
- 2.5.5. systems ensuring self-determination for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. This includes genuine consultation with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. This is especially relevant for the design, delivery and evaluation of services for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and employees.

3. Scope:

- 3.1. This policy applies to all departmental employees employed under the PS Act, including contractors, volunteers and students. These employment/engagement types will be referred to as 'employees' throughout this policy.
- 3.2. Where an employee identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, this policy must be considered in relation to their workplace arrangements and employment.
- 3.3. This policy is to be read and applied in conjunction with all department wide policies, procedures and guidelines. This policy does not change or replace employee obligations under the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (Code of Conduct) or other policies.
- 3.4. Supervisors have a responsibility to manage work performance and personal conduct of employees under section 40 of the PS Act. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring management practices are consistent with departmental policies and undertaken in a culturally safe manner.
- 3.5. Supervisors who become aware of specific actions and/or behaviours of employees that cause or could cause a loss of cultural safety are required to implement reasonable management action to address the employee's concerns. Reasonable management action taken in a reasonable way should not affect cultural safety.

4. Objectives:

- 4.1. The objective of this policy is to ensure culturally safe workplaces for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.
- 4.2. To ensure all employees contribute to a culturally safe work environment for all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.
- 4.3. To create an environment where Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees can communicate their cultural safety needs in the workplace.

5. Reframing of the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- 5.1. The department has an obligation to support a reframed relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples pursuant to the PS Act.
- 5.2. The department's legislative obligation under section 21 of the PS Act is fulfilled by.

- 5.2.1. recognising and honouring Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Queensland; and
- 5.2.2. engaging in open and honest discussions about the shared history of all Australians; and
- 5.2.3. recognising the importance to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the right to self-determination; and
- 5.2.4. promoting cultural safety and cultural capability at all levels of the public sector; and
- 5.2.5. working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to actively promote, include and act in a way that aligns with their perspectives, in particular when making decisions directly affecting them; and
- 5.2.6. ensuring the workforce and leadership of the entities are reflective of the community they serve; and
- 5.2.7. promoting a fair and inclusive public sector that supports a sense of dignity and belonging for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- 5.2.8. supporting the aims, aspirations and employment needs of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the need for their greater involvement in the public sector.

6. Equity, Diversity, Respect and Inclusion

- 6.1. Consistent with Chapter 2 of the PS Act, the department is committed to being a safe and inclusive workplace that fosters a culture of respect, celebrates diverse perspectives and recognises them as essential to our growth and innovation. The department strives to develop and support an empowered workforce which reflects the diversity that exists in the Queensland community the department serves.
- 6.2. Within the context of cultural safety, this means:
 - 6.2.1. all employees feel safe in the workplace; and
 - 6.2.2. the experiences and perspectives of members of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees, and others who do not identify as such, are invited and respected; and
 - 6.2.3. a culture of belonging is fostered in the workforce; and
 - 6.2.4. employees in the department are supported to work together to improve performance and wellbeing of all employees; and
 - 6.2.5. employees in the department possess the skills and knowledge, and have access to the systems, necessary to engage in employment matters in a respectful, appropriate and safe way.

7. Establishing a culturally safe environment

- 7.1. All employees must complete the department's mandatory cultural capability and awareness training.
- 7.2. All employees have a responsibility to engage in learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, with an aim to better understand the historic and contemporary issues which impact upon many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

- 7.3. Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning & development, including fostering collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues in contributing to future focused initiatives.
- 7.4. All employees should be mindful of internal and external factors which may be affecting the cultural safety or wellbeing of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees within the workplace. Matters which may affect cultural safety and wellbeing include, behaviour of colleagues, language, consultation processes, issues in the media, political discussions, and public inquiries.
- 7.5. All employees take reasonable care not to adversely affect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees' health and safety by exposing them to risk of psychological harm from culturally unsafe workplaces.
- 7.6. Leaders are responsible to implement and oversee culturally safe practices in the workplace. This includes monitoring and assessing the work environment to proactively identify factors that may impact cultural safety, and taking timely corrective actions as required.
- 7.7. Line supervisors must ensure team members participate in mandatory cultural capability training and model culturally safe behaviours themselves.

Open dialogue

- 7.8. Cultural safety can be facilitated through regular open conversations between employees and supervisors, and/or employees and colleagues, in which cultural safety needs are clearly expressed. This can occur through participation in yarning circles and other culturally appropriate conversations.
- 7.9. Cultural safety needs are unique to each individual. Conversations between managers/supervisors and employees should enable an employee to talk to their cultural needs. This includes what contributes to their cultural safety, and what may detract from their cultural safety at work. These conversations may occur at any time upon commencement or through supervision meetings.
- 7.10. Supervisors/managers and employees are encouraged to consult with People and Culture, or another identified work unit or service provider to seek guidance in relation to proactively establishing an environment of cultural safety.

Workplace cultural safety planning

- 7.11. A Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety may be developed and implemented to support individual or group cultural safety within a workplace.
- 7.12. The supervisor/managers have a responsibility to offer the creation of a Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety and engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees in the collaborative development of the plan. Options to adjust the approach to the development of the plan should be available if there is discomfort with the process.
- 7.13. A Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety may be developed and implemented proactively where no cultural safety concerns have been raised. However, the development and implementation of a Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety is recommended where concerns about cultural safety have been identified by an individual.
- 7.14. In the event specific cultural safety concerns are raised, the supervisors/managers must offer the creation of a Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety that will enable the employee/s to

share their specific cultural safety requirements. There is a mutual obligation between the leader and the employee/s to specifically identify the issues affecting cultural safety in the workplace and this information should be used to develop the plan. The developed plan should address these issues.

- 7.15. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees are encouraged to seek support from other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues through yarning circles, formal and informal discussions (yarns) to support wellbeing and cultural connectiveness.
- 7.16. Where necessary, supervisors and employees may engage the support of People and Culture, or another identified work unit or service provider in the development of a Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety.
- 7.17. The plan should be documented on the department's Workplace Plan for Cultural Safety template and stored locally in a secure and confidential location. Please review the Records Governance Procedure.
- 7.18. It is recommended that workgroup plans are reassessed on a six-monthly basis or as change of circumstance occurs, to ensure cultural safety needs continue to be met where reasonably practicable. Individual plans should be discussed in regular supervision and reassessed/changed where necessary.

Culturally safe supervision

- 7.19. Culturally safe supervision is a process that supports Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees by acknowledging and respecting their cultural values and practices, fostering open, honest and emphatic communication, adapting supervisory approaches to be culturally responsive such as incorporating their perspectives, communications styles, and decision-making processes, and engaging in self-reflection to enhance a supervisors own cultural understanding.
- 7.20. There is a joint obligation on employees and supervisors to ensure supervision practices are both culturally safe and respectful for all participants.
- 7.21. Supervisors/managers and employees are required to uphold the department's obligations with respect to equity, diversity, respect and inclusion, and reframing the relationship, within all supervisory engagements.
- 7.22. Supervisors will foster a culture that encourages positive engagement throughout supervision and ensure practices are safe and inclusive with the view to ensuring employees feel valued and supported to perform at their best.
- 7.23. Supervisors should remain cognisant of work-related factors and non-work-related factors affecting cultural safety that may be impacting upon an employee's performance, and where appropriate, supports and strategies should be put in place to further assist the employee.
- 7.24. The department understands that external factors, including community and societal influences, may impact an employee's sense of cultural safety and wellbeing within the workplace. While this policy focuses on fostering a culturally safe environment in work-related settings, employees are encouraged to access cultural supervision to discuss how external factors may affect their workplace experience.
- 7.25. Supervisors/managers can provide support through culturally safe supervision, helping employees navigate the impact of external influences as they relate to their role and responsibilities in the workplace.

- 7.26. Supervisors/managers and employees may proactively access guidance from People and Culture to establish culturally safe supervision practices.
- 7.27. Employees may request a secondary informal supervisor for the purposes of regular or adhoc cultural supervision. This does not change or replace the supervisory relationship with the employee's line manager.

Managing cultural safety concerns

- 7.28. Where a work environment feels culturally unsafe, concerns should be raised locally and informally to their line manager or another appropriate person within the relevant line management structure. An employee may seek a support persons' attendance for these discussions.
- 7.29. Specific matters impacting on cultural safety should be discussed and supervisors/managers and employees should work together to identify specific actions that can be undertaken to resolve these matters.
- 7.30. Employees may also choose to raise their concerns with a union representative who can support them in the process outlined above.
- 7.31. Line managers, or other appropriate individuals to whom concerns are raised, must make all reasonable efforts to meet the cultural safety needs of the employee/work unit. This includes providing a culturally sensitive response, seeking guidance where necessary, and documenting any actions taken.
- 7.32. Where concerns remain unresolved after attempts at local and informal resolution, an employee may seek to have their concerns addressed under the Employee Grievances Policy.
- 7.33. Both supervisors/managers and employees and may consult with People and Culture for guidance in relation to how to raise or address cultural safety concerns.
- 7.34. Where a cultural safety concern is impacting the health and safety of an employee, immediate measures must be taken to address those concerns, and they must be escalated through both health and safety protocols including but not limited to People and Culture and the Health and Wellbeing team. Employees may also seek support from other services.

8. Roles and Responsibilities:

Director-General

- 8.1. Setting the organisational structure and embedding cultural safety in all strategic elements of the work of the department as well as ensuring compliance and alignment with relevant legislation.
- 8.2. Engaging with First Nations Council in relation to matters of cultural safety and in development of organisational policy.
- 8.3. Commit to ongoing development including continuous learning about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary issues.

Executive and Senior Officers

- 8.4. Executive and Senior Officers are responsible for setting the strategic direction within their areas of responsibility, in particular promoting Government plans, policies and strategies which prioritise culturally safe workplaces for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. by:
 - 8.4.1. Ensuring the department's strategic plan and key priorities, and supporting plans and strategies are culturally responsive and safe.
 - 8.4.2. Commit to ongoing development including continuous learning about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary issues.
 - 8.4.3. Champion cultural safety and respect in all aspects of leadership, ensuring that the rights, values, and traditions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged and upheld.
 - 8.4.4. Provide impartial advice and leadership grounded in an understanding of the cultural context and lived experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Supervisors/Managers

- 8.5. Ensure they create an environment that encourages Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to celebrate their culture and to share their cultural safety needs.
- 8.6. Ensure all reasonable steps are taken to ensure cultural safety needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees are accommodated within the workplace.
- 8.7. Value cultural knowledge/experience and provide meaningful opportunities to access pathways for career progression.
- 8.8. If managers/supervisors become aware of a cultural safety issue or suspect one exists, they must take reasonable management action to address the issue.
- 8.9. Provide culturally safe supervision to employees and support employees to access cultural supervision where requested.
- 8.10. Actively engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to support the articulation of their requirements without placing undue burden on them.
- 8.11. Must work to understand the cultural safety requirements of individual employees, observe potential issues that may arise, and work collaboratively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to develop strategies to resolve these concerns.
- 8.12. Actively participate and collaborate in workplace cultural safety planning.
- 8.13. Commit to building and maintaining their own cultural capability and awareness through education and participation in cultural activities.
- 8.14. Incorporate cultural considerations in decision making and management action.
- 8.15. Supporting all employees to attend culturally significant events and providing Cultural Leave to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees where applicable.

Employees

- 8.16. All employees must treat each other with respect and dignity and behave in a way that is inclusive and considers the safety and wellbeing of other employees, clients and stakeholders.
- 8.17. All employees are required to contribute to a culturally safe work environment and comply with the Code of Conduct and other departmental policies and procedures which relate to appropriate workplace conduct.
- 8.18. If an employee witnesses or is a bystander during an event, interaction or process that they suspect is culturally unsafe, they have a responsibility to report it to their manager/supervisor or other appropriate person.
- 8.19. All employees are encouraged to identify specific behaviours and actions that cause them to feel culturally unsafe and strategies they feel may resolve those concerns.
- 8.20. All employees in the workplace are expected to play an active role in supporting a culturally safe environment by recognising and addressing behaviours that undermine cultural safety and by advocating for the wellbeing of their colleagues.
- 8.21. Commit to building and maintaining their own cultural capability and awareness through education and participation in cultural activities.
- 8.22. Commit to engaging with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to understand, where appropriate, how the cultural/colonial load can be shared in and/or reduced.

9. Human Rights

- 9.1. Cultural safety in the workplace must be considered in the context of section 28 of the HR Act which states:
 - 9.1.1. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold distinct cultural rights.
 - 9.1.2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must not be denied the right, with other members of their community:
 - 9.1.2.1. to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their identity and cultural heritage, including their traditional knowledge, distinctive spiritual practices, observances, beliefs and teachings; and
 - 9.1.2.2. to enjoy, maintain, control, protect, develop and use their language, including traditional cultural expressions; and
 - 9.1.2.3. to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their kinship ties; and
 - 9.1.2.4. to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land, territories, waters, coastal seas and other resources with which they have a connection under Aboriginal tradition or Island custom; and
 - 9.1.2.5. to conserve and protect the environment and productive capacity of their land, territories, waters, coastal seas and other resources.

10. Authority:

[Human Rights Act 2019](#)

[Industrial Relations Act 2016](#)

[Public Sector Act 2022](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

11. Delegations:

Refer to [HR Delegations](#)

12. Links:

[About reasonable management action | Fair Work Commission](#)

[Australian Human Right Commission - Definitions of Key Terms](#)

[Be healthy, be safe, be well framework](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Complaints about the Director-General policy](#)

[DCSSDS Respectful Language Guide](#)

[Employee Grievances policy](#)

[First Nations Identity Strain and Cultural Load at Work - DCA](#)

[Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022](#)

[Queensland Cultural Capability Portal | GovNet](#)

[Reframing the Relationship Plan guidelines](#)

[Stereotyping: Definition, Examples, & Consequences - The Berkeley Well-Being Institute](#)

[Unconscious bias - Monash University](#)

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Date of approval:	20 December 2024
Date of operation:	20 December 2024
Date to be reviewed:	20 June 2025

Office:	People and Culture, Corporate Services
Help Contact:	<u>IRPolicy@dcssds.qld.gov.au</u>

Belinda Drew
Acting Director-General

Schedule A – Definitions

Term	Definition
Bystander	A person/s not directly involves as a target or perpetrator, who observes an act or otherwise unacceptable behaviour.
Cultural/colonial load	Often invisible load borne by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace. Created additional workload associated with things like being consistently expected to respond to all things relating to their community and speak on behalf of all its people. It can mean frequently having to provide information, knowledge, education and support on First Nations issues, topics and days of significant – often without any formally agreed reduction or alteration to, or acknowledgment of, a person’s current workload.
Cultural safety	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety is defined as an environment that is safe for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together (Williams 2008).
Culturally unsafe conduct	Examples may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace harassment on the basis of race or cultural heritage • Unreasonable denial of Cultural Leave • Denying someone the ability to express their traditional and contemporary culture • Conduct which breaches an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee’s human rights under section 27 & 28 of the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>. • Lateral violence
Lateral violence	Negative or undermining behaviours expressed between individuals within the same community or group which stems from power imbalances, oppression or internalised stressors.
Reasonable management action	It is ‘reasonable management action’ for an employer to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • start performance management processes (such as a performance improvement plan) • take disciplinary action for misconduct • tell a worker about work performance that is not satisfactory • tell a worker their behaviour at work is not appropriate • ask a worker to perform reasonable duties as part of their job • take action to maintain reasonable workplace standards.

	But the way the employer takes these actions must also be 'reasonable'. If they are not reasonable, and they are repeated, these actions could still be bullying.
Stereotype	Assumptions made about people based on their belonging in certain social groups.
Self-determination	The right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to make decisions that affect their own lives, communities, and futures. Self-determination emphasises autonomy, cultural integrity, and control over their social, economical and political affairs.
Unconscious bias	Attitudes and patterns of perceptions that are held subconsciously. Automatic associations can lead to assumptions that are not always accurate.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

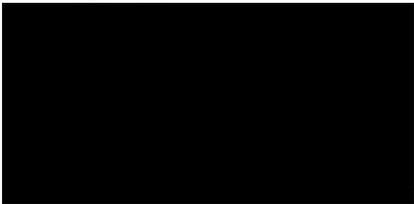
PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

**A/CHIEF PRACTITIONER, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY**

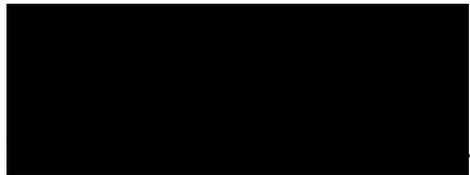
**Annexure 4 – Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services
submission to the Queensland Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry**

This and the preceding 94 pages is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 4” in the statement of Victoria Van Houdt dated 5 September 2025.



Victoria Van Houdt



Witness

Our reference: CSSDS 03669-2024

Chairperson Joshua Creamer
Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry

Dear Chairperson Creamer

Thank you for your letter of 8 August 2024, inviting the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services to provide a written submission to the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry (Inquiry).

I welcome the Inquiry's broad mandate to inquire into, document and conduct research about the experience, impact and effects of colonisation on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland.

The historical context in which child protection functions and services emerged continues to have profound and ongoing impacts. This is evident in the continued disproportionate rates of child protection intervention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Our current day systems and services and the strengths and challenges of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cannot be considered without also understanding the history of colonisation in Queensland.

For more than 60,000 years Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have held Customary Lore that defined what caring for the young and old looked like. This is the strength and history that we embrace as we work towards a reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037 (Our Way) and Yangaa Dahqu – Makem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap draw on the strength of culture and guide our commitment to working differently. These policy platforms seek to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system and improve responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families by identifying and addressing the past and ongoing impacts.

Seniors, carers and disability services functions have also changed dramatically over time, impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples differently.

Further work is required to explore the historical roots of disability service provision and care in Queensland, including the connections between colonisation and concepts of disability to understand how the disability policy landscape has evolved over time. This includes the transition of disability from a medical to social model of service delivery.

Moving forward, the seniors, carers, and disability services approach will be shaped by and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland, acknowledging the need for continued work in the area.

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services response to Part 4 of the invitation made under section 80 of the *Path to Treaty Act 2023* is provided at **Attachment 1**. Subsequent attachments provide more fulsome detail and information against each question.

The work of the Inquiry goes to the heart of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services' Reframing the Relationship Statement of Commitment, including our commitment to doing and being better in the future, alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children young people, carers, people with disability, older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, and communities.

I commit to transparent and responsive engagement with you and members of the Inquiry. I note this first invitation will be one of many to come over the three-year term of the Inquiry, which we will meet with honesty and openness.

Yours sincerely



Deidre Mulkerin
Director-General

26 / 08 / 2024

Enclosed:

Attachment 1: Submission of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services in response to letter of invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024

Attachment 2: Child Safety Administrative History

Attachment 3: Seniors, Carers and Disability Services Administrative History

Attachment 4: Multicultural Affairs Administrative History

Attachment 5: Overview of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services current policy and practice settings

Attachment 6: Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Categories of records holdings

Attachment 7: Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – Child Safety Response

Attachment 8: Inquiries and Commissions Since 2010 – Seniors and Disability Services Response

Attachment 1

Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry

Submission of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services in response to notice of invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024

Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry**Submission of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services in response to letter of invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024**

In response to part 4 of the Invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024 under section 80 of the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services provides the following information:

(a) The historical and contemporaneous relevance of the Department's functions and responsibilities to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference (refer Terms of Reference)

Since the mid-1850s, statutory child protection and adoption functions have changed significantly. The earliest iterations of these functions were the administration of industrial and reformatory schools and orphanages. Since then, these functions have evolved into the current statutory child protection system, which is administered by the Director-General of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. Adoption services and functions also fall under the responsibility of the Director-General, Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

The administrative arrangements of child protection and adoption functions and responsibilities from 1856 to the present day are detailed in **Attachment 2 – Child Safety Administrative History**. This document includes a high level summary of the legislation administered by each configuration of the department over time, and key legislative amendments made during that era of the department's existence. Inclusion is limited to legislation directly administered by the department with notes where responsibility for legislation previously administered by the department with responsibility for child protection has transferred to another department.

This document does not provide a complete picture of how Queensland government legislation was applied at different time periods or its impact, for example to enable the forced removal of children as part of the Stolen Generation and beyond. Care has been taken to develop this document in a culturally safe way, however some of the language and content represents the views of the time and are not culturally safe, or reflective of the views of the department today.

The government functions serving seniors, carers and providing disability services also fall under the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. The administrative arrangements of these functions from 1989 to the present day are detailed in **Attachment 3 – Seniors, Carers, Disability Administrative History**. In 1989 the department was restructured to reflect an enhanced provision of services, policy analysis and sensitivity to client group needs. Since then, the functions of these portfolio responsibilities have continued to evolve with machinery of government changes. Key events with particular relevance to the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry's Terms of Reference are detailed in the notes section.

Further work is required to finalise the Seniors, Carers and Disability Administrative History (**Attachment 3**), including investigating departmental arrangements for the functions of carers, disability services and seniors prior to 1989. Difficulties in undertaking this task is, in part, due to the need to explore the historical roots of disability, including the connection between colonisation and disability in order to understand how the disability policy landscape has evolved over time. The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services will provide subsequent advice to the Inquiry on this matter at a later date.

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services portfolio responsibility also includes Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ). The role of MAQ is to influence, facilitate and promote efforts to build welcome and belonging, and economic and social inclusion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The term 'culturally and linguistically diverse' is used to refer to people from a migrant or refugee background (which can include second or third generation migrants), people seeking asylum, and Australian South Sea Islander peoples. The administrative arrangements of these services and the variations over time are detailed in **Attachment 4 – Multicultural Affairs Administrative History**.

(b) An overview of any position, policy, strategy, plan or actions that the Department currently has in place relevant to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

An overview of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services current policy and practice settings, frameworks and strategies and practice guides is available at **Attachment 5 – Overview of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services current policy and practice settings**.

Child Safety Policy Context

The current child safety policy and practice context follows a significant ten-year reform period resulting from the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (2013). Child and family strategic priorities and targets have been identified to consolidate progress under the previous reform era and drive further change:

Priorities

- Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people from the child protection system.
- Meet the needs and aspirations of children and families.
- Reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children and families, community-controlled organisations and peak bodies.

Targets

- Increase the proportion of children and young people in kinship care to 70% by 2026.
- Reduce the proportion of children and young people in residential care by 2027.
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people can have services delivered by, and funding transitioned to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations within 10 years (2031).

The overarching policy context is established through Our Way: a generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037 (Our Way) and its associated action plans and Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap).

Our Way outlines a framework for transformational change over the next 20 years. It was developed as a partnership between the department and Family Matters Queensland and represents a long-term commitment by government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to work together. The department acknowledges the need to work in a different way to improve the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experiencing vulnerability and set the right conditions so each child can reach their full potential and thrive. Our Way acknowledges the strength, determination and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and is the leading strategy guiding change in Queensland's child protection system.

The twenty-year span of Our Way is being implemented through three phases of action plans: Changing Tracks (2017-2022); Breaking Cycles (2023-2031); and Hitting Targets (2032-2037).

The current Breaking Cycles Action Plan was developed in partnership with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak, after community and sector consultation.

While Our Way takes a broader systems approach, Yangga Dahgu – Makem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap) (Roadmap) provides a framework for the significant organisational and individual change required to reframe the department's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. Led by the First Nations Council, the Roadmap is an evolving document developed through extensive, statewide internal consultation, which included 145 engagement sessions attended by 2,745 staff.

Set against six domains, some of the Roadmap's key focus areas include developing strong culturally responsive leadership; growing individual and collective knowledge of past and continuing impacts of government intervention in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; addressing systemic bias, institutional and direct racism and lateral violence; building a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and a culturally capable non-Indigenous workforce; and strengthening the department's accountability, cultural governance and oversight.

Information on the entire Child Safety Practice and Service Delivery model, including the legislative framework underpinning it is provided, noting that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experience over-representation at all stages of the child protection continuum. Current policy and procedural guidance is available to departmental staff and the public via the Child Safety Practice Manual (further information and links available in **Attachment 5**). Some policy documents are not public facing, and a link is therefore not available. These policies can be provided to the Inquiry if required.

Seniors, Carers and Disability Services Context

The seniors, carers and disability services context relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as they may identify as a senior, carer, and/or a person with disability and be impacted by intersectional disadvantage. This context is of relevance to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference in particular due to the impact of opportunities to participate in the public, economic and social life of Queensland on equal terms with the wider Queensland community.

All governments have committed to the Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 (ADS), and associated action plans, which identify priority outcomes and actions to advance the human rights of people with disability in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The ADS recognises intersectionality and its effect on persons.

Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27 (QDP) supports delivery of ADS priorities in Queensland and guides continued actions to improve the lives of Queenslanders with disability. Under the QDP, all Queensland Government departments are required to develop, publish and deliver key actions they will take towards a common objective of improving access and inclusion for people with disability. All levels of government, businesses, industries and communities are encouraged to make the same commitment.

The Queensland Disability Reform Framework sets out a cohesive and structured approach to the next stage of disability reform in Queensland. The Framework has a key focus on initial work to be undertaken in Queensland in response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the final report of the Independent Review of the NDIS. In addition, the Queensland Government Response to the Disability Royal Commission outlines the Queensland Government's positions on Disability Royal Commission recommendations.

Additionally, existing commitments and current reform processes, both within Queensland and nationally, further drive reform and action in the context of disability policy and are detailed in **Attachment 5**.

A list of relevant policy frameworks informing the work of seniors and carers portfolio is also provided at **Attachment 5**. This is a summary and may not be a complete list. Seniors, carers and disability are cross-cutting policy matters, which intersect with many policy settings.

Multicultural Affairs Queensland

The Queensland Government's legislative and policy framework for multicultural affairs proactively and consistently considers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, even where activities are not specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as follows:

- The Multicultural Queensland Charter honours the ancient and enduring cultures of the First Australians.
- The Queensland Multicultural Policy identifies recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture is fundamental to supporting and welcoming inclusive and harmonious communities across Queensland.
- The Queensland Multicultural Policy commits to seeking support from Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, drawing on their strength, resilience and past experiences, to build a more welcoming and inclusive community for all Queenslanders, including those who are newly arrived.

The Queensland Language Services Policy commits to supporting people who need access to interpreters and translators to improve access to the full range of government and government-funded services. The policy incorporates migrant and refugee languages, Aboriginal languages, Torres Strait Islander languages and Auslan (Australian sign language).

The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland and Strengthening Multicultural Queensland programs provide funding towards multicultural events and projects that engage culturally and linguistically diverse communities, groups and individuals, and the broader community, to contribute to building an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland. This can include projects and events that build intercultural understanding and connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds (for example, Intercultural Indigenous Bush Tucker tours delivered in Mount Isa in August 2024).

The Inquiry's objectives include engaging with the wider Queensland community. To support these objectives, Multicultural Affairs Queensland can help to inform and support engagement with people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, community leaders and non-government organisations to support inclusive and effective engagement in the Inquiry across the wider Queensland community.

(c) Any broad categories of historical documents or data the Department holds relevant to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services' record keeping requirements and practices have changed significantly over the past 150 years. Records relating to different portfolio responsibilities have been owned, managed and transferred between departments throughout this time.

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services has significant data holdings, however the recordkeeping and department changes over time have resulted in inconsistent and incomplete metadata to search and draw from. As a result, there are limitations and barriers to accessing records and data held.

A broad summary of categories of historical documents or data held by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services is detailed in **Attachment 6: Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Categories of records holdings**.

Attachment 6 introduces the types of records held, key considerations and limitations in terms of accessibility and volume, and information on the systems used.

An index of the record holdings does not exist in any meaningful format due to the quantity of the record holdings and quality of the metadata.

The availability of historical disability services records is impacted by the decommissioning of regional service centres and some central functions following the Queensland Government's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The department's ability to search and retrieve specific documents and data for the Inquiry will be impacted by the limitation of complete and reliable indexes, quality of meta data and the quantity and quality of the records holdings. To overcome these barriers and apply searches that yield the appropriate records, it will be helpful for the department to understand the type and intent of requests for historical documents and data the Inquiry is seeking. This will greatly assist the department to support the Inquiry to fulfil its functions.

As per the exemptions in the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, not all records can be shared with the Inquiry due to various legislative provisions and protections. However, the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services is committed to open and transparent truth-telling and commits to working with the Inquiry in this spirit.

(d) Any work, tasks, goals or actions allocated to the Department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by any previous inquiry or commission since 2010 that directly relates to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

Work allocated to the department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by previous inquiries and commissions since 2010 that relate to child safety functions is provided at **Attachment 7 - Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 - Child Safety Response**.

In addition to previous inquiries and commissions, findings from formative reviews that relate to child safety functions (listed in **Attachment 7**, Tables 4-8) have been included for the purpose of highlighting relevant findings and system level recommendations that have shaped and continue to shape the current child protection and family support system in Queensland.

In some cases, these additional reviews refer to recommendations associated more broadly with kinship care, culturally safe and responsive practice, and intervention, as well as specifically seeking to address the disproportionate representation of, and the outcomes for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system (across all jurisdictions); thereby holding relevance to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

There have been several seminal Inquiries and Commissions prior to 2010 that have shaped the current child protection and family support system in Queensland, including Bringing them Home - the 1997 Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, and the 1999 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions (Forde Inquiry). While these inquiries and commissions are not in scope for this request, the department can provide information to the Inquiry on these matters if required.

Work allocated to the department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by previous inquiries, commissions and reviews since 2010 that relate to seniors, carers and disability services functions is provided at **Attachment 8 - Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – Seniors and Disability Services Response**.

Attachment 8 is a summary only and may not be a complete list. Difficulties in undertaking this task include that disability policy intersects with many policy settings and therefore recommendations directly relating to disability policy may be directed to other universal service systems, such as justice, health and education.

Attachment 1

Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry

Submission of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services in response to notice of invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024

Attachments

Attachment 2: Child Safety Administrative History

Attachment 3: Seniors and Disability Services Administrative History

Attachment 4: Multicultural Affairs Administrative History

Attachment 5: Overview of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services current policy and practice settings

Attachment 6: Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Categories of records holdings

Attachment 7: Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – Child Safety Response

Attachment 8: Inquiries and Commissions Since 2010 – Seniors and Disability Services Response

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(a) The historical and contemporaneous relevance of the Department's functions and responsibilities to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference (refer Terms of Reference)

Since the mid-1850s, statutory child protection and adoption functions have changed significantly. The earliest iterations of these functions were the administration of industrial and reformatory schools and orphanages. Since then, these functions have evolved into the current statutory child protection system, which is administered by the Director-General of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. Adoption services and functions also fall under the responsibility of the Director-General, Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

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The government functions serving seniors, carers and providing disability services also fall under the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. The administrative arrangements of these functions from 1989 to the present day are detailed in **Attachment 3 – Seniors, Carers, Disability Administrative History**. In 1989 the department was restructured to reflect an enhanced provision of services, policy analysis and sensitivity to client group needs. Since then, the functions of these portfolio responsibilities have continued to evolve with machinery of government changes. Key events with particular relevance to the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry's Terms of Reference are detailed in the notes section.

Further work is required to finalise the Seniors, Carers and Disability Administrative History (**Attachment 3**), including investigating departmental arrangements for the functions of carers, disability services and seniors prior to 1989. Difficulties in undertaking this task is, in part, due to the need to explore the historical roots of disability, including the connection between colonisation and disability in order to understand how the disability policy landscape has evolved over time. The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services will provide subsequent advice to the Inquiry on this matter at a later date.

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services portfolio responsibility also includes Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ). The role of MAQ is to influence, facilitate and promote efforts to build welcome and belonging, and economic and social inclusion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The term 'culturally and linguistically diverse' is used to refer to people from a migrant or refugee background (which can include second or third generation migrants), people seeking asylum, and Australian South Sea Islander peoples. The administrative arrangements of these services and the variations over time are detailed in **Attachment 4 – Multicultural Affairs Administrative History**.

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Priorities

- Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people from the child protection system.
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Set against six domains, some of the Roadmap's key focus areas include developing strong culturally responsive leadership; growing individual and collective knowledge of past and continuing impacts of government intervention in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; addressing systemic bias, institutional and direct racism and lateral violence; building a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and a culturally capable non-Indigenous workforce; and strengthening the department's accountability, cultural governance and oversight.

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All governments have committed to the Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 (ADS), and associated action plans, which identify priority outcomes and actions to advance the human rights of people with disability in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The ADS recognises intersectionality and its effect on persons.

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Additionally, existing commitments and current reform processes, both within Queensland and nationally, further drive reform and action in the context of disability policy and are detailed in **Attachment 5**.

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The Queensland Language Services Policy commits to supporting people who need access to interpreters and translators to improve access to the full range of government and government-funded services. The policy incorporates migrant and refugee languages, Aboriginal languages, Torres Strait Islander languages and Auslan (Australian sign language).

The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland and Strengthening Multicultural Queensland programs provide funding towards multicultural events and projects that engage culturally and linguistically diverse communities, groups and individuals, and the broader community, to contribute to building an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland. This can include projects and events that build intercultural understanding and connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds (for example, Intercultural Indigenous Bush Tucker tours delivered in Mount Isa in August 2024).

The Inquiry's objectives include engaging with the wider Queensland community. To support these objectives, Multicultural Affairs Queensland can help to inform and support engagement with people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, community leaders and non-government organisations to support inclusive and effective engagement in the Inquiry across the wider Queensland community.

(c) Any broad categories of historical documents or data the Department holds relevant to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services' record keeping requirements and practices have changed significantly over the past 150 years. Records relating to different portfolio responsibilities have been owned, managed and transferred between departments throughout this time.

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services has significant data holdings, however the recordkeeping and department changes over time have resulted in inconsistent and incomplete metadata to search and draw from. As a result, there are limitations and barriers to accessing records and data held.

A broad summary of categories of historical documents or data held by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services is detailed in **Attachment 6: Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Categories of records holdings**.

Attachment 6 introduces the types of records held, key considerations and limitations in terms of accessibility and volume, and information on the systems used.

An index of the record holdings does not exist in any meaningful format due to the quantity of the record holdings and quality of the metadata.

The availability of historical disability services records is impacted by the decommissioning of regional service centres and some central functions following the Queensland Government's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The department's ability to search and retrieve specific documents and data for the Inquiry will be impacted by the limitation of complete and reliable indexes, quality of meta data and the quantity and quality of the records holdings. To overcome these barriers and apply searches that yield the appropriate records, it will be helpful for the department to understand the type and intent of requests for historical documents and data the Inquiry is seeking. This will greatly assist the department to support the Inquiry to fulfil its functions.

As per the exemptions in the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*, not all records can be shared with the Inquiry due to various legislative provisions and protections. However, the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services is committed to open and transparent truth-telling and commits to working with the Inquiry in this spirit.

(d) Any work, tasks, goals or actions allocated to the Department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by any previous inquiry or commission since 2010 that directly relates to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

Work allocated to the department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by previous inquiries and commissions since 2010 that relate to child safety functions is provided at **Attachment 7 - Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 - Child Safety Response**.

In addition to previous inquiries and commissions, findings from formative reviews that relate to child safety functions (listed in **Attachment 7**, Tables 4-8) have been included for the purpose of highlighting relevant findings and system level recommendations that have shaped and continue to shape the current child protection and family support system in Queensland.

In some cases, these additional reviews refer to recommendations associated more broadly with kinship care, culturally safe and responsive practice, and intervention, as well as specifically seeking to address the disproportionate representation of, and the outcomes for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system (across all jurisdictions); thereby holding relevance to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

There have been several seminal Inquiries and Commissions prior to 2010 that have shaped the current child protection and family support system in Queensland, including Bringing them Home - the 1997 Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, and the 1999 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions (Forde Inquiry). While these inquiries and commissions are not in scope for this request, the department can provide information to the Inquiry on these matters if required.

Work allocated to the department pursuant to findings or recommendations made by previous inquiries, commissions and reviews since 2010 that relate to seniors, carers and disability services functions is provided at **Attachment 8 - Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – Seniors and Disability Services Response**.

Attachment 8 is a summary only and may not be a complete list. Difficulties in undertaking this task include that disability policy intersects with many policy settings and therefore recommendations directly relating to disability policy may be directed to other universal service systems, such as justice, health and education.

Attachment 1

Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry

Submission of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services in response to notice of invitation from the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry dated 8 August 2024

Attachments

Attachment 2: Child Safety Administrative History

Attachment 3: Seniors and Disability Services Administrative History

Attachment 4: Multicultural Affairs Administrative History

Attachment 5: Overview of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services current policy and practice settings

Attachment 6: Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Categories of records holdings

Attachment 7: Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – Child Safety Response

Attachment 8: Inquiries and Commissions Since 2010 – Seniors and Disability Services Response

<p>*Responsible for matters regarding child safety services and disability services*</p>	<p>Adoption</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 2) 2023, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Disability Services on 18 May 2023. It retained its functions relating to children but responsibility for Multicultural Affairs was transferred to the Department of Environment and Science, and Youth Justice to the new Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training. It gained responsibility for the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. *Responsible for child safety services and disability services*</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009 Adoption Regulation 2020 National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth powers) Act 2018 National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth powers) Regulation 2019</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> updated the purpose of the Act to increase the focus on supporting families caring for children. It enhanced the right of the child to make their views known in decision-making, including that the child can request to say no to the Chief Executive to review their case plan (updated 9/2/2023) to include that <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons</i> have the right to participate in significant decisions under the Act about <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</i>, and relating to the development and delivery of services provided by the department. It introduced the requirement to make "active efforts" in regard to the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle</i>. It adjusted requirements for <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers</i> in carrying out care activities in relation to a child. Other changes included to custody arrangements on placement, to the requirements for carers, to the requirements for carers' assessments, to increase information sharing, support and training for approved carers, and confidentiality protections for non-users of harm or risk of harm.</p> <p>For the purpose of the Act, <i>active efforts</i> refers to successful, thorough and timely efforts to apply the principle.</p> <p>The <i>Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023</i> clarified the approach to making decisions about the placement of a child. It clarified the process for <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</i> under the Adoption Act 2009 and this has preference when seeking permanency.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2020, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs on 12 November 2020. The department retained its functions relating to children, however responsibility for women and domestic violence prevention was transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General with youth affairs transferred to the Department of Environment and Science. The Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Multicultural Affairs, the Department of Youth Justice was established and amalgamated into this new Department.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> amended regulations around the register of applicants, authority holders and former authority holders.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2020, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs on 12 November 2020. The department retained its functions relating to children, however responsibility for women and domestic violence prevention was transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General with youth affairs transferred to the Department of Environment and Science. The Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Multicultural Affairs, the Department of Youth Justice was established and amalgamated into this new Department.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> clarified the Chief Executive's responsibility to support the child's wellbeing and interests under the Act.</p> <p>Agreements through the <i>North Queensland Indigenous Adoption Act 2023</i> also provided for the collation and maintenance in registers, kept by the registrar, of information about transfers of parentage under the <i>Member Overseas Activity Waiver (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Finding Practice) Act 2020</i>.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2020, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs on 12 November 2020. The department retained its functions relating to children, however responsibility for women and domestic violence prevention was transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General with youth affairs transferred to the Department of Environment and Science. The Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Multicultural Affairs, the Department of Youth Justice was established and amalgamated into this new Department.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> defined the Chief Executive's responsibility to support the child's wellbeing and interests under the Act.</p> <p>Agreements through the <i>North Queensland Indigenous Adoption Act 2023</i> also provided for the collation and maintenance in registers, kept by the registrar, of information about transfers of parentage under the <i>Member Overseas Activity Waiver (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Finding Practice) Act 2020</i>.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2020, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs on 12 November 2020. The department retained its functions relating to children, however responsibility for women and domestic violence prevention was transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General with youth affairs transferred to the Department of Environment and Science. The Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Multicultural Affairs, the Department of Youth Justice was established and amalgamated into this new Department.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> defined the Chief Executive's responsibility to support the child's wellbeing and interests under the Act.</p> <p>Agreements through the <i>North Queensland Indigenous Adoption Act 2023</i> also provided for the collation and maintenance in registers, kept by the registrar, of information about transfers of parentage under the <i>Member Overseas Activity Waiver (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Finding Practice) Act 2020</i>.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Services Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 4) 2020, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women was renamed and established as the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs on 12 November 2020. The department retained its functions relating to children, however responsibility for women and domestic violence prevention was transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General with youth affairs transferred to the Department of Environment and Science. The Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Multicultural Affairs, the Department of Youth Justice was established and amalgamated into this new Department.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>The <i>Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022</i> defined the Chief Executive's responsibility to support the child's wellbeing and interests under the Act.</p> <p>Agreements through the <i>North Queensland Indigenous Adoption Act 2023</i> also provided for the collation and maintenance in registers, kept by the registrar, of information about transfers of parentage under the <i>Member Overseas Activity Waiver (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Finding Practice) Act 2020</i>.</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>	<p>Adoption Act 2009</p>	<p>Adoption Regulation 2020</p>	<p>Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003</p>

<p>Additional Information ESTABLISHMENT This agency was previously known, from 25 Jan 1996 to 27 Feb 1996, as the Department of Family and Community Services, which superseded the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. The title was changed to the Department of Family, Youth and Community Care on 25 February 1996 after the general state elections, when the Department underwent structural changes.</p>	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE The regional structure was largely decentralised to effectively meet needs at a local level. It consisted of the Director-General, the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Youth Health Services Development, Division of Protective Services and Juvenile Justice, as well as the Office of the Director-General, Information Services and Finance and Administration. The regional structure was built around services to clients and aimed to allow the greatest possible flexibility so that services could be responsive to local needs. The five regions were Brisbane North, Brisbane South, South West Queensland, Central Queensland and North Queensland.</p>	<p>Agency functions also included: - Youth Justice/Juvenile Justice - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs - Youth Affairs - Community Services</p>	
<p>AN 1991 - FEB 1996</p>	<p>Department of Family and Community Services - Child Protection services - Adoption services</p>	<p>Children's Court Act 1992 Children's Services Act 1995 Family Services Act 1987 Children's Court Act 1992 (as 2002) (11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 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986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000</p>	<p>Children's Court Act 1992 Children's Services Act 1995 Family Services Act 1987 Children's Court Act 1992 (as 2002) (11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 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995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000</p>
<p>AN 1991 - FEB 1996</p>	<p>Department of Family and Community Services - Child Protection services - Adoption services</p>	<p>Children's Court Act 1992 Children's Services Act 1995 Family Services Act 1987 Children's Court Act 1992 (as 2002) (11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, </p>	

<p>and Sport) Responsible for administration of welfare services including sports and recreation activities with and without persons, covered transport and recreational activities.*</p>	<p>Adoption services</p>	<p>Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Minister of Children, Youth, Disability and Family Services Quebec Government</p>	<p>Financial assistance to youth and community resource organizations - Social work services - Employment schemes for surf clubs and voluntary rescue organizations</p>
<p>Additional Information Following certain revision, the Department of Community and Welfare Services and Sport was established by proclamation on 2 Jan 1975. Additional responsibilities transferred to the new Department were the Division of Social Work from the Health Department, protection and parole, activities of the Quebeled Industrial Institution for the Blind as well as the Blind Advisory Committee.</p>				
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE The Department had direct control of the Child Assistance Branch and the Division of Social Work. Administrative support was provided to the following sub-departments: Department of Children's Services, Parent Department, Sport Department, Parole Board, Child Protection and Parole Officer's Office as well as the Quebeled National Fitness Council and the Quebeled Industrial Institution for the Blind. The Department was also responsible for the Advisory Committee for the Blind and the Inter-Departmental Committee for Welfare.</p>				
<p>JUN 1972 - JUN 1975 Department of Children's Services (renamed by Department of Health) *Responsible for orphanages, adoptions, welfare of state wards, and other children's services.*</p>	<p>Children's Services State Ward's welfare; Orphanage administration</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Agency functions also included: - Juvenile Aid Bureau Control functions also included: - Tourism policy - Sport Administration - Youth Affairs</p>
<p>Additional Information The Children's Services Department continued to promote, safeguard and protect the well-being of the children and youth of the state through a comprehensive and coordinated program of child and family welfare. The Department of Tourism, Sport and Welfare provided administrative support to the Department of Children's Services.</p>				
<p>JAN 1968 - JUN 1972 Department of Children's Services (renamed by Department of Health) *Responsible for orphanages, adoptions, welfare of state wards, and other children's services.*</p>	<p>Children's Services State Ward's welfare; Orphanage administration</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Agency functions also included: - Juvenile Aid Bureau Control functions also included: - Administrative control of all health, medical and allied services</p>
<p>Additional Information The Children's Services Department continued to promote, safeguard and protect the well-being of the children and youth of the state through a comprehensive and coordinated program of child and family welfare. The Department of Tourism, Sport and Welfare provided administrative support to the Department of Children's Services.</p>				
<p>AUG 1966 - JAN 1968 Department of Children's Services (renamed by State Child Care Department) *Responsible for orphanages, adoptions, welfare of state wards, and other children's services.*</p>	<p>Children's Services State Ward's welfare; Orphanage administration</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Agency functions also included: - Juvenile Aid Bureau Control functions also included: - Registration of factories and shops - Industrial relations and workplace safety - Labour - Consumer affairs - Fire services</p>
<p>Additional Information The Children's Services Department continued to promote, safeguard and protect the well-being of the children and youth of the state through a comprehensive and coordinated program of child and family welfare. This came under the portfolio of the Minister for Health between 1968 and 1972.</p>				
<p>SEPT 1969 - AUG 1966 State Child Care Department (renamed by Labour and Industry Department) *Responsible for state children's welfare.*</p>	<p>Children's Services</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965</p>	<p>Children's Services Act 1965 Adoption of Children Act 1984</p>	<p>Agency functions also included: - Compensation and control of delinquents and convicted children and their property</p>
<p>Additional Information The Children's Services Department continued to promote, safeguard and protect the well-being of the children and youth of the state through a comprehensive and coordinated program of child and family welfare. The Department of Labour and Tourism provided administrative support to the Department of Children's Services between 1966 and 1968.</p>				

<p>Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act 1865</p> <p>The Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act 1865 introduced the first system of public care for children in New Zealand. It provided for the establishment of industrial and reformatory schools for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent. The Act also provided for the establishment of a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent.</p>	<p>Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paying Prisons - Quarantine - Registration and statistics - Provision and location of workhouses and hospitals - Miscellaneous services - Administration of Courtship and Custody of Infants Act 1891 - Allocation of internal arrangements not confined to any other Minister
<p>Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925</p> <p>The Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925 introduced a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent. It provided for the establishment of a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent.</p>	<p>Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paying Prisons - Quarantine - Registration and statistics - Provision and location of workhouses and hospitals - Miscellaneous services - Administration of Courtship and Custody of Infants Act 1891 - Allocation of internal arrangements not confined to any other Minister
<p>Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925</p> <p>The Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925 introduced a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent. It provided for the establishment of a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent.</p>	<p>Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paying Prisons - Quarantine - Registration and statistics - Provision and location of workhouses and hospitals - Miscellaneous services - Administration of Courtship and Custody of Infants Act 1891 - Allocation of internal arrangements not confined to any other Minister
<p>Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925</p> <p>The Child Welfare and Adoption Act 1925 introduced a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent. It provided for the establishment of a system of public care for children who were found to be in need of care or who were at risk of becoming delinquent.</p>	<p>Police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paying Prisons - Quarantine - Registration and statistics - Provision and location of workhouses and hospitals - Miscellaneous services - Administration of Courtship and Custody of Infants Act 1891 - Allocation of internal arrangements not confined to any other Minister

DEC 1859 - OCT 1879	The Colonial Secretary's Office <i>"Administered all matters except those of the Colonial Treasurer and Attorney-General"</i>	A107	Industrial and Reformatory Schools State Children Act	Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act 1858 (repealed 1911) by the State Children Act	<p>The Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act 1858 was introduced to establish and regulate industrial and reformatory schools for children under 15 who were neglected or convicted of an offence.</p> <p>For the purpose of the Act, a neglected child included any child found wandering about, frequenting any public place, sleeping in the open air, and who shall not have any home or settled place of abode, or any visible means of subsistence; dwelling with a respectable or unrespectable, supported wholly or in part by charity, and any child born of an illegitimate mother. "Masters" were also defined as industrial schools or institutions to which "neglected" children could be sent, allowing for the placement and education of "delinquent and forward born tender children".</p> <p>At the time, a neglected child meant, without a warrant, any child under 15 he considered to be neglected, who could be removed and placed in an industrial/reformatory school under court order.</p> <p>At the time, the following functions were included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naval and military establishments, including the volunteer corps - Emigration - Land orders - Electric telegraph - Registration and statistics - Aboriginal affairs - Patents, registration of - Trademarks, registration of - Brands, registration of - Local government - Police including petty sessions and Native Police - Prisons, the education of - Hospitals - Hospitals and charitable institutions - Public health - Medical establishments, including quarantine, vaccination, and lunatic asylums. - Prisons, commissions and other instruments under the Great Seal - Naturalization of aliens - Localisation establishments - Public education - Library and scientific institutions - Printing and bookbinding - Printing, government - Advertising, government - Government vessels - Remission and Execution of Sentences - Naval and Military Authorities' Correspondence - Consular office with Consulate of Foreign State <p>While the Colonial Secretary's Office continued to govern various areas until August 1858, this ceased following the establishment of the Public Instruction Department.</p>
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Additional Information
ESTABLISHMENT
 Robert George Wyndham Herbert, Queensland's first Colonial Secretary, was appointed by Governor Bowen on 10 December 1859 following the proclamation and publication of the Letters Patent establishing the colony.
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE
 Abraham Ogden Mowbray, the first Under Colonial Secretary, appointed on 15 December 1859, was largely responsible for the administrative structure of the Colonial Secretary's Office. This structure, which remained basically unaltered until 1895, provided the foundation for the creation of new, separate departments. Under the immediate control of the Colonial Secretary was a small head office with a number of first, second and third grade clerks, each with a specific function. The records preserved in this office constitute the Colonial Secretary's Office record group.

Administrative history timeline - Disabilities, Seniors and Carers

Date Range	Responsible Department	QSA ID (Archive Search Agency ID)	DCSSDs functions	Legislation responsible for	Notes
MAY 2023 - present	Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services <i>"Responsible for all matters regarding child safety, seniors and disability services"</i> <i>"Responsible for all matters regarding child safety, seniors and disability services, and multicultural affairs"</i>	A12018	Disability services Carers Multicultural Affairs (from December 2023) (Functions also include Child Safety, Adoptions and Redress scheme for Old survivors of institutional child sexual abuse)	Disability Services Act 2006 Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 Forensic Disability Act 2011 Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 See Child Safety administrative history	Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability - report (2023) Queensland Disability Reform Framework (2024) Queensland Government response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (2024) Disability Services (Respective Practices) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (2023)
NOV 2020 - MAY 2023	Department of Seniors, Disability Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships <i>"Responsible for seniors, disability services, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships"</i>	A11917	Disability services Carers	Guide - Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 Disability Services Act 2006 Forensic Disability Act 2011 Carers (Recognition) Act 2008	Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - 2023 Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships - 2021 Australia's Disability Strategy, 2021-2031 Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27, Together a Better Queensland Queensland Productivity Commission's inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) market in Queensland (2021) - Volume 1 Queensland Productivity Commission's inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) market in Queensland (2021) - Volume 2 Senate Select Committee on Autism - report (2022)
DEC 2017 - NOV 2020	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors <i>"Responsible for provision of community services to the disadvantaged, people with disabilities and seniors."</i>	A11841	Disability Services Carers	Disability Services Act 2006 Forensic Disability Act 2011 Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009 Carers (Recognition) Act 2008	Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships - 2020 Section 157, Review of the operation of the Forensic Disability Act 2011 - Final report, including the Addressing Needs and Strengthening Services: Review of the Queensland Forensic Disability Service System Report (2018) Government response to the independent Review of the Queensland Forensic Disability System (2019) The Forensic Disability Service report (Queensland Ombudsman) (2019) All abilities Queensland: opportunities for all - State disability plan, 2017-2020 Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and completed until 2020.

		Seniors			
<p>Additional Information ESTABLISHMENT On 12 December 2017, under Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 3) 2017, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services was renamed the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, retaining functions relating to community services to the disadvantaged, people with disabilities and seniors. Functions relating to child safety, women and domestic violence reform and youth were transferred to the newly established Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors - 2017</p>	<p>Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services</p> <p>Disability services</p> <p>Carers</p> <p>Home and community care</p> <p>Seniors</p> <p>(Functions also included Child Protection services, Adoption)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p> <p>Carers (Recognition) Act 2008</p>
<p>Additional Information "Responsible for provision of community services to the disadvantaged, people with disabilities, seniors and children and multicultural affairs."</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services</p> <p>Disability services</p> <p>Carers</p> <p>Home and community care</p> <p>Seniors</p> <p>(Functions also included Child Protection services, Adoption)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Under Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 1) 2012, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services was established on 3 April 2012, following the dissolution of the Department of Communities.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE On 16 February 2015, under the Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2015, this Department continued to operate under the same name and previous responsibilities, with the added responsibility of Multicultural Affairs.</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p> <p>"Responsible for the provision of community services and housing to the disadvantaged, children, multicultural groups etc. as well as administration of sporting events and recreation."</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Home and community care - to JUL 2007 Aged and residential care facilities - to APR 2007 NGO contract administration for seniors From 2011 onwards - Regulation of accommodation services including retirement villages</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Seniors</p> <p>Home and community care - to JUL 2007</p> <p>Aged and residential care facilities - to APR 2007</p> <p>NGO contract administration for seniors</p> <p>From 2011 onwards -</p> <p>Regulation of accommodation services including retirement villages</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Carers</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Carers</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Disability services - from 2009</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Disability services - from 2009</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 - this was not included in the AAO but not introduced in 2008</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 - this was not included in the AAO but not introduced in 2008</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Disability Services Act 1992 (repealed 2006)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Disability Services Act 1992 (repealed 2006)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Australian Sign: the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Australian Sign: the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information National Disability Strategy (2010 - 2020)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>National Disability Strategy (2010 - 2020)</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Productivity Commission 2011, Disability Care and Support. Report no. 54 - recommended that the current system be replaced by a new disability care and support scheme, the NDIS</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Productivity Commission 2011, Disability Care and Support. Report no. 54 - recommended that the current system be replaced by a new disability care and support scheme, the NDIS</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information PC 2011 - Volume 1</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>PC 2011 - Volume 1</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information PC 2011 - Volume 2</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>PC 2011 - Volume 2</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>
<p>Additional Information Queensland Government Submission to the Productivity Commission's draft report: Disability Care and Support</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Government Submission to the Productivity Commission's draft report: Disability Care and Support</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services - 2012</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Queensland Government transition to the NDIS commenced in 2016 and continued until 2020.</p>	<p>Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019: Enabling choices and opportunities</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006</p> <p>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</p>

<p>Forensic Disability Act 2011</p>	<p>Butler, B. Promoting Balance in the Forensic Mental Health System. Final Report. Review of the Queensland Mental Health Act 2000 (2005) (deinstitutionalisation re intellectual and cognitive disability)</p> <p>In response to the Butler and Carter Reports, the ten-bed Forensic Disability Service was opened on 1 July 2011 at the Wacol precinct for the purposes of providing a more appropriate forensic response for people with intellectual disability or cognitive impairment but no mental illness who are deemed to require detention in a secure facility.</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities - 2004</p>
<p>Careers (Recognition) Act 2008 Mental Health Act 2000 Health Services Act 1991 (jointly administered with Queensland Health) Legacy Trust Fund Act 2001</p> <p>(Functions also included Adoption's, Family Support, and included Child Protection from 2009 onwards)</p>	<p>See Child Safety administrative history</p>	<p>Citation Department of Communities - 2004</p>
<p>Additional Information ESTABLISHMENT On 12 February 2004, under Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2004, the Department of Families was abolished and its functions transferred to two newly-created departments: the Department of Communities, and the Department of Child Safety. From 26 March 2009, the Department of Communities absorbed the functions of the abolished Departments of Child Safety, Disability Services, and Housing, as well as the sport and recreation functions of the previous Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE From 26 Mar 2009 the Department is divided into 12 Service Areas: Regional Service Delivery Operations; Strategy, Policy and Performance; Housing and Homelessness Services; Child Safety, Youth and Families; Community Participation; Disability, HACC and Community Mental Health Services; Multicultural Affairs Queensland; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services; Communities Property Portfolio; Organisational Services; Information Services; Financial Services.</p>	<p>A10478 Community services including to the aged (Functions also included Child Protection, services to children including neglected and abused children, Family support, administration of adoptions)</p> <p>See Child Safety administrative history</p>	<p>Citation Department of Families - 2001</p>
<p>Additional Information ESTABLISHMENT The Department of Families was established on 22 February 2001 under the Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 1) 2001. The new Department replaced the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, with Youth Policy being transferred to the Department of Employment and Training.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE The department's service delivery system included an operational directorate of statewide and regional offices, and youth justice operations including youth detention centres. Nearly half of the department's budget was managed through community organisations and volunteer care providers.</p> <p>Disability Services Queensland "Responsible for services to disabled persons."</p>	<p>A3688 Disability services</p>	<p>Citation Department of Families - 2001</p> <p>Review of the Royal Stafford Centre Recommendations. Report to Disability Services Queensland by the Honourable W.J. Carter QC. (Deinstitutionalisation). Tabled in Legislative Assembly 1 June 2000</p> <p>2002 DSQ commenced the review of the Disability Services Act 1992 (no link)</p> <p>2005 Introduction of the Disability Services Act 2006</p>
<p>Additional Information ESTABLISHMENT The first Queensland government department devoted solely to disability issues, Disability Services Queensland (DSQ), was established on 6 December 1999 under the Public Service Departmental Arrangements Notice (No. 3) 1999. The new department replaced the former Disability program that was part of the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE The Department fulfils its functions through a centralised policy and corporate services directorate, regional operations and grants to non-government organisations.</p> <p>Department of Families, Youth and Community Care Intellectual Disability services - until 1999 (2000)</p>	<p>449 Intellectual Disability services - until 1999 (2000)</p>	<p>Citation Disability Services Queensland - 1999</p>

<p><i>"Responsible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, neglected or abused children, juveniles in conflict with the law, people with disabilities, older people, the homeless, disadvantaged, families in crisis, etc."</i></p>	<p>Disability Services - until 1999 Older people</p> <p>Community services (including regulation of retirement homes, eventide homes) (Functions also included Child Protection services neglected or abused children)</p>	<p>Disability Services Act 1992 Guide Dogs Act 1972</p> <p>See Child Safety administrative history</p>	<p>Citation Department of Families, Youth and Community Care - 1996</p>
<p>Additional Information</p> <p>ESTABLISHMENT This agency was previously known - from 25 Jan 1996 to 26 Feb 1996 - as the Department of Family and Community Services, which superseded the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. The title was changed to the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care on 26 February 1996 after the general state elections, when the Department underwent structural changes.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE The Department's services were highly decentralised to effectively meet needs at a local level. It consisted of the Director-General, the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Youth Bureau, Division of Disability Services, Division of Community Services Development, Division of Protective Services and Juvenile Justice; also the Office of the Director General, Information Services and Finance and Organisational Services. The regional structure was built around services to clients and aimed to allow the greatest possible flexibility so that services could be responsive to local needs. The five regions were Brisbane North, Brisbane South, South West Queensland, Central Queensland and North Queensland.</p>			
<p>JAN 1986 - FEB 1986</p>	<p>A141</p> <p>Intellectual Disability services Community services (excluding regulation of retirement villages, eventide homes) (Functions also included Child Protection services)</p>	<p>Intellectually Disabled Citizens Act 1985 Disability Services Act 1992 Guide Dogs Act 1972</p> <p>See Child Safety administrative history</p>	<p>Citation Department of Family and Community Services - 1996</p>
<p>Additional Information</p> <p>ESTABLISHMENT The Department of Family and Community Services replaced the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs on 25 January 1996.</p>			
<p>JUL 1988 - JAN 1986</p>	<p>A2568</p> <p>Intellectual Disability services Community services (excluding regulation of retirement villages, eventide homes) (Functions also included Child Protection services- protection against abuse and neglect, Adoption services)</p>	<p>Guide Dogs Act 1972 Intellectually Disabled Citizens Act 1985 Disability Services Act 1992</p> <p>See Child Safety administrative history</p>	<p>Citation Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs - 1989</p>
<p>Additional Information</p> <p>ESTABLISHMENT On 7 Dec 1992, the Department of Community Services and Ethnic Affairs was amalgamated with the Department of Family Services under the new name of Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. The Department was re-structured to reflect an enhanced provision of services, policy analysis and sensitivity to client group needs.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS The Director-General was in charge of four major Divisions: Protective Services and Juvenile Justice, Community Services Development, Intellectual Disability Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, all of them supporting Regional Offices and special branches. By 1995 the structure had changed again and the Director-General managed a Bureau of Ethnic Affairs, the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Finance and Organisational Services, Information Services, and three Divisions: Community Services Development, Intellectual Disability Services, Protective Services and Juvenile Justice.</p>			

Multicultural Affairs

Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS)

Business*	Type	Reports To (Agency, Minister, Other Agency)	Status (Current, Previous, Ongoing, Disputed, Legacy)	Effective Dates	Responsibilities (Necessary/Different)	Previous / Business Information	Portfolio Details
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Current	18/12/2023 to current		DLS	
Department of Environment and Science (DES)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Previous	30/02/2023 to 18/12/2023		DCYMA	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Previous	27/11/2020 to 14/05/2023		DCYJMA	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs (DLGPRMA)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Previous	21/12/2017 to 21/12/2020		DCCLAS	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCSSDS)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Previous	16/02/2015 to 21/12/2017		DATSMA	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA)	Department / Agency	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	02/02/2012 to 19/02/2015		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAO) Part of Department of Communities (DOC)	Entity part of agency	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	3/04/2012		DATSMA	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA)	Department / Agency	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	26/03/2012 to 03/04/2012		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Communities (DOC)	Department / Agency	Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	22/05/2011 to 20/04/2012		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Communities (DOC)	Department / Agency	Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	12/11/2009 to 27/09/2011		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Communities (DOC)	Department / Agency	Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	26/03/2009 to 12/11/2009		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Communities (DOC)	Department / Agency	Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Seniors and Youth	Previous	14/09/2007 to 26/03/2009		DOC	Multicultural Affairs
Multicultural Affairs Queensland	Department / Agency	Minister for Environment and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	01/07/2007 to 13/09/2007		DPC	Multicultural Affairs
Part of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Department / Agency	Minister for Small Business, Information Technology Policy and Multicultural Affairs	Previous	28/01/2006 to 01/07/2007		DPC	Multicultural Affairs
Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC)	Department / Agency	Premier and Minister for Trade	Previous	15/06/2001 to 28/07/2005		n/a	Multicultural Affairs

B. Position, policy, strategy, plan or actions that the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services currently has in place relevant to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

Overarching policy context – Child Safety

Over the past 10 years, the child protection and family support system in Queensland has experienced significant reform. This was led largely by the 2012 Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Carmody Inquiry) and implementation of the recommendations in [Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Report](#) (June 2013).

Since the Carmody Inquiry, the two major drivers of the child protection and family support system reform in Queensland have been [Supporting Families Changing Futures 2019-2023](#), and [Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037](#) (Our Way).

Our Way was developed in 2017 in partnership with Family Matters Queensland to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the tertiary child protection system.

Supporting Families Changing Futures 2019-2023 built off the work of the Carmody Inquiry and incorporated recommendations from key reviews and reports by the Queensland Family and Child Commission in 2016 and 2017 and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in 2017. *Supporting Families Changing Futures* concluded at the end of 2023.

The department is now focused on consolidating progress made and implementing *Our Way* and the department's child and family strategic priorities and targets, under the oversight of the Queensland First Children and Families Board established under *Our Way*.

Priorities

- Meet the needs and aspirations of children and families.
- Eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people from the child protection system.
- Reframe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children & families, community-controlled organisations & peak bodies.

Targets

- Increase the proportion of children and young people in kinship care to 70% by 2026
- Reduce the proportion of children and young people in residential care by 2027
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people can have services delivered by, and funding transitioned to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations within 10 years (2031).

In addition to *Our Way*, the department is implementing [Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap](#), which provides the strategic guidance for the department to reframe its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

More information on each of the foundational elements of the policies, strategies and actions of the child and family support system is detailed below and in [Appendix 1](#).

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037 and Action Plans	<p><u>Our Way</u></p> <p>Our Way is the Queensland Government's long-term commitment in partnership with Family Matters Queensland and the Queensland First Children and Families Board to eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the child protection system and improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families.</p> <p><i>Our Way</i> is delivered through a series of seven action plans, <i>Changing Tracks</i> (2017–2022), <i>Breaking Cycles</i> (2023–2031) and <i>Hitting Targets</i> (2032–2037).</p> <p><u>Breaking Cycles</u></p> <p>The Breaking Cycles phase (2023–2031) builds on the foundations for transformational change in the child protection system set under the first phase of <i>Changing Tracks</i>, with a focus on changing the way that services are designed and delivered with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families to eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system in Queensland.</p> <p>The Breaking Cycles - Action Plan 2023-2025 has eight priority areas, which were agreed in partnership between the department and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak.</p>	<p>Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037</p> <p>Breaking Cycles: An action plan: co-designing, developing and implementing services with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2023–2025</p>
Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)	<p>The Yangga Dahgu – Mekem Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap) (the Roadmap) outlines priority areas for action to support the department to reframe its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>The Roadmap sits alongside the department's Statement of Commitment (page 6-7 of the Roadmap) which prescribes a new way for staff to work more efficiently and effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders guided by the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i>, the <i>Path to Treaty Act 2023</i>, the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> and the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>.</p>	<p>Yangga Dahgu - Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship Roadmap (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</p>

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Workforce policies	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy</p> <p>The <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2024-2028</i> (the strategy) is an action item under the <i>Reframing the Relationship Roadmap</i> and is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the department to become an employer of choice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples • build a culturally capable workforce by attracting, retaining and developing a workforce that values the unique knowledge, skills, and expertise of all employees • support the department's target of 9% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce by 2026. <p>Certified agreement</p> <p>Initiatives within the Child Safety and Youth Justice Certified Agreement 2023 (CSJY Agreement) and CORE Agreement 2023 (Core Agreement) aim to support, enhance, develop, recognise and protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. These include development of a Cultural Safety Policy, the creation of seven new identified positions to provide cultural supervision to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and ensuring access to cultural leave.</p>	<p>Child Safety and Youth Justice Certified Agreement 2023 (CB/2023/143) (qirc.qld.gov.au)</p>
<p>Child Safety Legislation and Practice</p> <p>The foundation of statutory child protection functions and powers is detailed in the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>.</p> <p>The department's Framework for Practice details the required values and commitment of departmental staff in engaging with children, families, parents and communities.</p> <p>Practitioners are guided by policies and operational procedures, which outline how the responsibilities under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> are to be exercised.</p> <p>The Child Safety Practice Manual provides a comprehensive set of procedures and supporting documents that guide and inform the practice of frontline child safety staff.</p> <p>Additional tools make up child safety practice, including inter-agency agreements, memorandums of understanding and protocols.</p> <p>Each of the key elements that inform child safety practice are detailed further below.</p>		
Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Legislative Framework	<p><u>Child Protection Act 1999</u></p> <p>The <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Act) is the legal framework supporting the department's delivery of child protection functions. The Director-General, Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services has primary responsibility for the Act however certain powers and decisions can be delegated. These are detailed in the approved statutory delegations.</p> <p>The main principle of the Act is that the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child, both through childhood and for the rest of the child's life, are paramount. Other principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child's family has the primary responsibility for the child's upbringing, protection and development • family support is the preferred way of ensuring a child's welfare • if a child does not have a parent who is able and willing to protect them, then the State is responsible for protecting the child • support should be given to the child and their family to support them to return to their family, if it is in their best interests • if a child does not have a parent able and willing to give the child ongoing protection in the foreseeable future, the child should have long-term alternative care • where possible a child should be placed in the care of kin and with their siblings • a child should be able to maintain relationships with the child's parents and kin, if it is appropriate for the child • a child should be able to know, explore and maintain the child's identity and values, including their cultural, ethnic and religious identity and values • a child has the right to express the child's views about what is, and is not, in the child's best interests • principles for achieving permanency for a child. <p>Legislative requirements for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in care</p> <p>The Act lists an order of preference for deciding which action, goal or Court order best achieves permanency for a child identified as being in need of protection.</p>	<p>Child Protection Act 1999</p> <p>Place a child in care Child Safety Practice Manual (csyw.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</p>



Title	Summary	Link (if available)
	<p>When making care arrangements for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child the Act requires additional actions to be taken, including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination; consider the long-term impacts of decisions on a child's identity, connection with family, culture and community (section 5C(1)). • Make active efforts to apply the <u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle</u> (Section 5C(2)). • Place the child with a member of the child's family group, if practicable. Otherwise, the following hierarchy applies, in order of priority (Section 83(4) and (5)): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a member of the child's community or language group ○ an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who is compatible with their community or language group ○ another Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person ○ a person who lives near the child's family, community or language group and demonstrates the capacity to keep the child connected to kin, country and culture. • Ensuring the child's care arrangement needs to provide the optimal retention of the child's relationship with their parents, siblings and other people of cultural significance (Section 83(6)(b)). • Before placing a child with a person who is not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, make sure the proposed carer is committed to facilitating contact with the child's family members; helping the child to maintain a connection to their community and language group, and their culture; preserving and enhancing the child's sense of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. <p><u>Adoption Act 2009</u></p> <p>Adoptions in Queensland are regulated under the <u>Adoption Act 2009</u> (<u>Adoption Act</u>), including when considering the adoption of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child. The Adoption Act respects Aboriginal tradition and Torres Strait Island customs and does not promote adoption, as provided for under the Adoption Act, as an appropriate option for the long-term care of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child. However, if a parent or guardian of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child wishes to explore adoption for the child's care, the Adoption Act contains a range of safeguards to ensure the child's culture is respected and that adoption only proceeds if there is no better option available to provide the child with long-term stable care.</p> <p>Adoption of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child should only be considered as a way of meeting the child's need for long-term stable care only if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) there is no better available option, b) that it is in the best interests of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child to be cared for within an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community, c) to maintain contact with the child's community or language group, d) to develop and maintain a connection with the child's Aboriginal tradition or Island custom and for the child's sense of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identity to be preserved and enhanced. <p>Adoption of a child requires the informed consent of the parents, unless a Court determines one of the limited exceptions in the Adoption Act apply.</p> <p>For more information regarding amendments to the <u>Child Protection Act 1999</u> and the <u>Adoption Act 2009</u> over time, including previous legislative frameworks see Attachment 2 - <u>Child Safety Administrative History</u>.</p>	<p><u>Adoption Act 2009 - Queensland Legislation - Queensland Government</u></p>
<p>Child Safety Practice Framework</p>	<p>The role of departmental staff in providing statutory child protection services is to assess, plan and work with children, families, parents and communities to build safety, belonging and wellbeing. This is done best when children have a say in the decisions that affect them. All aspects of child protection practice and service delivery are guided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The values, principles, knowledge and skills outlined in the <u>Strengthening families Protecting children Framework for Practice</u> (<u>Framework for Practice</u>) • A commitment to the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (more information provided below) • A commitment to applying the <u>Safe and Together model</u> to partner with domestic and family violence survivors and intervene with domestic and family violence perpetrators. 	<p><u>Strengthening families Protecting children Framework for Practice</u></p>

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
	<p>The Framework for Practice is a strengths-based, safety-oriented practice framework that guides child protection practice in Queensland. It is designed to help all the key stakeholders involved with a child – the parents, non-government organisations, partners, lawyers, magistrates and the child itself, to keep a clear focus on assessing and enhancing child safety at all points in the child protection process.</p> <p>The practice is accompanied by a number of tools designed to deepen practice, make it more collaborative and participatory, to ensure that practice is robust and rigorous, to create action steps and plans that allow children, young people and families to thrive, and to work more effectively in seeking to strengthen families to secure enduring child safety, belonging and wellbeing.</p>	
<p>Policy and procedural guidance</p>	<p>The department currently has a range of operational policies in place to provide information about how responsibilities under the Act are to be exercised, and to support effective decision making and consistent service delivery to children and families in contact with the department.</p> <p>Current departmental policies are available to departmental staff and the general public via the Child Safety Practice Manual.</p> <p>The department's current suite of policies informing service delivery to children and families each have applicability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in contact with the department. The department also has specific policies and procedures, which departmental staff are required to apply when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.</p> <p>A high-level overview of authorising documents guiding service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families is captured below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in decisions about the development and delivery of services policy</i> (250) (note this policy is not publicly facing) ensures that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's right to participate in decisions about the development, design and delivery of services that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families is upheld, and that services are culturally responsive and positively contribute to reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. • The <i>Case planning (active efforts) policy</i> (263) aims to ensure that Child Safety staff develop and review case plans in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>, including that active efforts must be made to apply the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle when making a significant decision about a child. • The <i>Decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</i> policy (641) aims to ensure active efforts are made in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and decisions made under the Act promote safe care and connection with family, community, culture and country and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are enabled to influence, participate and control decisions about their children and families. • The <i>Delegating authority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</i> policy (647) (note this policy is not publicly facing) guides the delegation of functions or powers under the Act to the Chief Executive of a community-controlled organisation (see further information on delegated authority below). • The <i>Participation of children and young people in decision making (active efforts) policy</i> (369) aims to ensure that children and young people are provided with ongoing opportunities and are supported to meaningfully participate in decisions that affect or may affect them. • The <i>Permanency planning (active efforts) policy</i> (594) ensures that in achieving permanency for a child, additional principles for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are applied to identify the best option for achieving permanency. Permanency planning with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child and their family must respect the right to self-determination and the long-term effect a decision will have on a child's identity and connection with their family. • The <i>Placement of children in care (active efforts) policy</i> (578) aims to ensure that active efforts are made to apply the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle when decisions are made regarding the placement of a child in care. <p>It is noted that various iterations of some of these policies and procedures have existed throughout the history of the department and are regularly updated in response to legislative changes and amendments, reviews and associated recommendations, government priorities and contemporary best practice.</p>	<p>Home Child Safety Practice Manual (csyw.qld.gov.au)</p>

Commissioning and Service Delivery

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
<p>Approach to commissioning</p>	<p>The Department invests in non-government organisations and other entities to deliver a range of child protection services and programs to respond to the needs of children, young people and families.</p> <p>The commissioning cycle that the department applies is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessing needs and developing responses 2. Market approaches and procurement 3. Contract design and negotiation 4. Contract and performance management 5. Compliance 6. Managing program level performance 7. Contract review and close out <p>Across all program areas, the redesign of program specifications and service models is required to ensure that the services funded reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of working.</p>	
<p>Funded service responses specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families</p>	<p><u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who are experiencing vulnerability across the state. • The services make it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to access culturally responsive support to improve their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ATSICCOs) deliver the services to ensure they are culturally safe, reflect community needs and aspirations and draw upon local cultural knowledge. • The services operate across the child protection continuum, from early intervention through to supporting families and children where ongoing child safety intervention is required. <p><u>Family Participation Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Family Participation Program (FPP) provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to participate in child protection decision making. • The focus of the program is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children and young people under the age of 18 years, including those who are at risk of being the subject of a child protection notification or who are already subject to intervention by the statutory child protection system. <p><u>Family Care - trial</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department is working with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) to trial a new approach to family care developed by the ATSICCO sector. The model offers a range of flexible supports to ensure that children are living within their extended family network, either averting child safety intervention or occurring within a child protection context. • Funding for a two-year trial was allocated in the 2023-24 budget and one service has commenced in Brisbane to trial the approach. 	<p>Family Wellbeing Services Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>Family Participation Program Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</p>
<p>Transition of funding to the community controlled sector</p>	<p>In addition to the specialist responses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families comprise a large proportion of clients accessing services delivered by non-Indigenous organisations.</p> <p>The department has committed to ensuring that any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or family can access their supports through an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation (ATSICCO) if they choose.</p> <p>The department will transition a proportionate share of resources to the ATSICCO sector to enable this to occur.</p> <p>This commitment recognises that ATSICCOs are best placed to work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities because of their cultural knowledge and understanding, which is central to improving children's and families' wellbeing.</p> <p>Significant levels of investment will need to transition from non-Indigenous providers to ATSICCOs.</p> <p>Some program areas have seen substantial progress in directing funding to the ATSICCO and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sectors. Delegated Authority funds can only be allocated to ATSICCOs, however in other program areas, such as placement services, the transition is occurring from a low base. It will take substantial effort by the government and the non-government sector to achieve proportionate investment in the medium term.</p>	

Title	Summary	Link (if available)																																																																						
	<p>The table below shows expenditure with ATSCCOs as a proportion of overall investment in key departmental programs over three financial years.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">2021-22</th> <th colspan="2">2022-23</th> <th colspan="2">2024-24</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Program</th> <th>Funding</th> <th>Share</th> <th>Funding</th> <th>Share</th> <th>Funding</th> <th>Share</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Placement services</td> <td>\$7,637,915</td> <td>2.2%</td> <td>\$15,855,365</td> <td>3.8%</td> <td>\$26,780,416</td> <td>5.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Child protection support services</td> <td>\$115,293</td> <td>0.4%</td> <td>\$177,493</td> <td>0.7%</td> <td>\$0</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Families</td> <td>\$56,836,361</td> <td>28.7%</td> <td>\$59,193,019</td> <td>29.0%</td> <td>\$76,963,167</td> <td>34.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family-based care</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>\$1,992,874</td> <td>51.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Delegated Authority</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>\$8,552,953</td> <td>100.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service system support and development</td> <td>\$2,788,986</td> <td>35.1%</td> <td>\$2,857,118</td> <td>34.7%</td> <td>\$3,471,576</td> <td>38.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Young people</td> <td>\$5,212,098</td> <td>17.6%</td> <td>\$5,390,588</td> <td>17.2%</td> <td>\$9,480,835</td> <td>21.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$72,590,653</td> <td>11.9%</td> <td>\$83,473,583</td> <td>12.1%</td> <td>\$127,241,821</td> <td>16.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Efforts are also being directed to ensuring a skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is available to support the growth of the ATSCCO sector. The department is working with QATSICPP to develop and resource a workforce strategy for the sector.</p>		2021-22		2022-23		2024-24		Program	Funding	Share	Funding	Share	Funding	Share	Placement services	\$7,637,915	2.2%	\$15,855,365	3.8%	\$26,780,416	5.7%	Child protection support services	\$115,293	0.4%	\$177,493	0.7%	\$0	0.0%	Families	\$56,836,361	28.7%	\$59,193,019	29.0%	\$76,963,167	34.6%	Family-based care	-	-	-	-	\$1,992,874	51.4%	Delegated Authority	-	-	-	-	\$8,552,953	100.0%	Service system support and development	\$2,788,986	35.1%	\$2,857,118	34.7%	\$3,471,576	38.9%	Young people	\$5,212,098	17.6%	\$5,390,588	17.2%	\$9,480,835	21.3%	Total	\$72,590,653	11.9%	\$83,473,583	12.1%	\$127,241,821	16.3%	
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Example of key reforms and upcoming changes

There are ongoing practice changes occurring across the service system, being driven by the commitments in Our Way. Some key reforms and upcoming changes are detailed below.

<p>Delegated Authority</p>	<p><u>Delegated authority</u> is a priority action under Our Way – Breaking Cycles 2023-25 Action Plan. It is a process enabling one or more of the functions and powers of the chief executive (i.e. Director General of department) to be delegated to the chief executive officer (prescribed delegate) of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation, for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person, where certain requirements are met (<u>Chapter 4 Part 2A of the Child Protection Act 1999</u>).</p> <p>The department is working in close partnership with QATSICPP and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled child and family organisations across Queensland to build knowledge, processes, resources, and the capacity of both the government and non-government sector to support this new way of working.</p> <p>A 10-year blueprint, <u>Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming systems and practice by making decisions in our way (Reclaiming our storyline)</u> has been jointly developed by the department and QATSICPP to guide the progressive implementation of delegated authority in Queensland.</p> <p>In January 2020, the implementation of delegated authority and delegation of specific powers and functions commenced at three early adopter locations— Rockhampton in partnership with Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID), and Caloundra and Maroochydore in partnership with REFOCUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation . Delegated functions include reunification (placement with parent), family contact, cultural connection and case planning.</p> <p>The expansion of delegated authority across Queensland is progressing with a total of 17 services in place as of 1 July 2024 (delivered by 12 organisations and working in partnership with 20 Child Safety Service Centres). Further services will be established in 2024-25 and 2025-26 in line with the readiness, support and interest of In-scope Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and communities.</p>	<p><u>Delegated authority Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</u></p> <p><u>Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming systems and practice by making decisions in our way (Reclaiming our storyline)</u></p>
<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle</p>	<p>In 2017, the <u>Child Protection Act 1999</u> was amended to include the <u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle</u> as additional principles in the administration of the Act in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</p>	<p><u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</u></p>

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
	<p>In 2021, further legislative amendment occurred to strengthen the application of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarify that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to participate in decisions relating to the development and delivery of services require staff to make active efforts to apply the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle when making a significant decision in relation to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child. <p>Changes were operationalised through amendments to policies and procedures and through a department-wide training package aimed at embedding the standard of active efforts in the application of the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle for significant decisions.</p>	
UNIFY	<p>UNIFY is a four-year program, to be delivered in 2024, that will replace the Integrated Client Management System (ICT system used by frontline child safety and youth justice staff) and a number of other systems.</p> <p>The Unify vision is to ensure Queensland families, children and young people are cared for, protected, safe and able to reach their full potential through improved capability for our staff, government agencies and partners to share information and integrate service delivery.</p> <p>Unify will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve information sharing and collaboration across Queensland Government, social services and justice sectors improve engagement with young people, families, carers and services streamline processes for client and case management implement a contemporary case and client management system that will enable the best outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families. 	<p>Unify Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcsds.qld.gov.au)</p>
Enhanced Intake and Assessment Approach	<p>An enhanced approach to intake and assessment will commence from late 2024 alongside the new Unify client management system. It will provide earlier targeted responses for more families with lower-risk concerns including access to appropriate and timely supports, while higher-risk matters will continue to have conventional investigative responses.</p> <p>The enhanced approach reflects a commitment to place-based cultural knowledge and understanding the wishes and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.</p>	
First Nations Intake Officer trial	<p>Action 1.5 of the Breaking Cycles 2023-25 Action Plan is to undertake a First Nations Intake Officer trial to address the influence of cultural bias in intake decisions. The trial was undertaken in the Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland Region in 2023.</p>	<p><i>Breaking Cycles: An action plan: co-designing, developing and implementing services with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2023–2025</i></p>

Policy Context – Disability

The Queensland disability services policy context is driven by national and state-based strategies and frameworks.

All governments have committed to the [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 \(ADS\)](#), and associated action plans, which identify priority outcomes and actions to advance the human rights of people with disability in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

[Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27 \(QDP\)](#) supports delivery of ADS priorities in Queensland and guides continued actions to improve the lives of Queenslanders with disability. Under the QDP, all Queensland Government departments are required to develop, publish and deliver key actions they will take towards a common objective of improving access and inclusion for people with disability. All levels of government, businesses, industries and communities are encouraged to make the same commitment.

The [Queensland Disability Reform Framework](#) sets out a cohesive and structured approach to the next stage of disability reform in Queensland. The Framework has a key focus on initial work to be undertaken in Queensland in response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the final report of the Independent Review of the NDIS. In addition, the [Queensland Government Response to the Disability Royal Commission](#) outlines the Queensland Government's positions on Disability Royal Commission recommendations.

Additionally, existing commitments and current reform processes, both within Queensland and nationally, further drive reform and action in the context of disability policy.

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 (ADS) and associated material	<p>Australia's Disability Strategy (ADS) is the national disability framework to improve the lives of Australians with disability, including Queenslanders with disability.</p> <p>ADS Targeted Action Plans (TAPs) TAPs sit underneath the ADS and aim to make improvements in targeted areas for people with disability. There are five target areas covering employment, community attitudes, early childhood, safety and emergency management.</p> <p>ADS Data Improvement Plan <i>The Data Improvement Plan</i> aims to improve data needed to track progress against the Outcomes Framework.</p> <p>Employ My Ability <i>Employ My Ability</i> is an Associated Plan under the ADS and aims to increase employment outcomes for people with disability.</p> <p>ADS Outcomes Framework The ADS <i>Outcomes Framework</i> measures, tracks and reports on outcomes for people with disability, including measuring the contribution key systems such as healthcare, housing, education and employment are making to achieve outcomes.</p>	<p>At a glance - Australia's Disability Strategy Disability Gateway</p> <p>The Strategy and supporting documents Disability Gateway</p> <p>Data Improvement Plan</p> <p>Disability Employment Strategy Department of Social Services, Australian Government (dss.gov.au)</p> <p>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Outcomes Framework</p>
National Disability Advocacy Framework 2023-2025 (NDAF)	The National Disability Advocacy Framework (NDAF) commits governments to work together to improve national consistency and access to advocacy services for people with disability across Australia.	National Disability Advocacy Framework 2023-2025
Commonwealth, State and Territory Supported Employment Plan	The <i>Commonwealth, State and Territory Supported Employment Plan</i> aims to boost employment opportunities for people with disability with high support needs.	Commonwealth, State and Territory Supported Employment Plan
Disability Sector Strengthening Plan – Closing The Gap (Disability SSP)	The Disability SSP has been developed to support achievement of Priority Reform Two of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) to build the community-controlled disability sector	Disability Sector Strengthening Plan – Closing The Gap
Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27: <i>Together a better Queensland</i> (QDP)	The Queensland Disability Plan (QDP) supports delivery of ADS priorities in Queensland and guides continued actions to improve the lives of Queenslanders with disability.	Queensland's Disability Plan 2022-27
The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) Disability Service Plan	The purpose of the DCSSDS Disability Service Plan is to deliver meaningful action for the inclusion of Queenslanders with disability in the work DCSSDS does.	Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services - Disability Service Plan

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
	provide NDIS supports and services through a registered NDIS provider to undergo a worker screening check. The Agreement commenced from 1 July 2018 in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, and later for other jurisdictions	
Assessment and Referral Team (ART)	<p>The Queensland Government provides Queenslanders with complex disability support needs, case managed support to access the NDIS. The department's Assessment and Referral Team (ART) supports at risk and disadvantaged Queenslanders aged 7 to 64 years to access the NDIS.</p> <p>ART supports eligible people with complex needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to navigate multiple service systems. ART also supports individuals and their families living in regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to access NDIS supports.</p> <p>25% of ART's intensive case management model identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p>NDIS access support Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)</p>
Queensland Government Forensic Disability Service	<p>The Forensic Disability Service (FDS) — a purpose built, medium secure residential care facility solely for FDS clients with oversight by the Director of Forensic Disability.</p> <p>In response to several reports into the forensic mental health system, the ten-bed (FDS) was opened on 1 July 2011 at the Wacol precinct for the purposes of providing a more appropriate forensic response for people with intellectual disability or cognitive impairment but no mental illness who are deemed by a Court to require detention in a secure facility.</p> <p>Section 157: Review of the operation of the Forensic Disability Act 2011 – Final report, including the Addressing Needs and Strengthening Services</p> <p>The report provides an overview of the review of the operation of the <i>Forensic Disability Act 2011</i> and identifies key areas of improvement to that Act.</p>	<p>Butler, B, Promoting Balance in the Forensic Mental Health System: Final Report, Review of the Queensland Mental Health Act 2000 (2006) (deinstitutionalisation re intellectual and cognitive disability)</p> <p>Challenging Behaviour and Disability: A Targeted Response – a Report by William Carter QC, (Carter Report) tabled in Parliament 22 May 2007</p> <p>Review of the Queensland Forensic Disability Service System report (2018)</p>
Queensland Government Submission to the Productivity Commission's draft report: Disability Care and Support	<p>In May 2011, the Queensland Government responded to the Productivity Commissions Inquiry into a Long Term Care and Support Scheme, and draft report <i>Disability Care and Support</i>. The response includes focus on service provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, including those in rural and remote locations.</p>	<p>Queensland Government Submission to the Productivity Commission's draft report: Disability Care and Support</p>

Seniors

Queensland, like many regions around the world, has an ageing population. In 2023, more than 926,000 Queenslanders are 65 or older and the Australian Bureau of Statistics projects that by 2053, more than one in five Queenslanders will be 65 years or older.

The Queensland Government recognises the need to respond to the evolving needs of older Queenslanders.

On 8 August 2024, the Queensland Government launched the Age-friendly Queensland: the Queensland Seniors Strategy 2024–29, a five year vision for a Queensland where older people are:

- connected to their communities and the people and services that matter to them,
- cared for and supported by world class frontline services when needed, and
- celebrated for the significant contribution they make to our economy and our society.

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
An Age-friendly Queensland: The Queensland Seniors Strategy 2024-2029	<i>An Age-friendly Queensland: The Queensland Seniors Strategy</i> is the blueprint for creating an age-friendly state that embraces older people and recognises the enormous value they play in our families, neighbourhoods and wider communities.	Queensland Seniors strategy 2024-2029 (dcssds.qld.gov.au)
Queensland Seniors Action Plan 2024–2026	The <i>Queensland Seniors Action Plan 2024–2026</i> supports the Queensland Seniors Strategy to make Queensland an age-friendly state where older people live active, healthy and productive lives, are connected, cared for and celebrated.	Queensland Seniors Action Plan 2024-2026 (dcssds.qld.gov.au)
National plan to respond to the abuse of older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019-2023	The <i>National Plan to respond to the abuse of older Australians (Elder Abuse)</i> is concerned with responding to the abuse of older people, as defined by age.	National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019-2023
Seniors Social Isolation Services	The Department invests in Seniors Social Isolation Services across the state. These services deliver a wide range of activities to help older people stay connected with each other and their communities.	\$12.5 million to support social connections among older Queenslanders - Ministerial Media Statements
Seniors Legal and Support Services (SLASS)	The Department funds Seniors Legal and Support Services (SLASS) and Seniors Financial Protection Services, which provide free legal and social support for older Queenslanders experiencing elder abuse, mistreatment, neglect or financial exploitation.	Queenslanders urged to help end elder abuse - Ministerial Media Statements
Elder Abuse Prevention Unit	The Department funds a state-wide Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and Helpline, which promotes the right of older people to live free from abuse and provides free advice and assistance to anyone who experiences, witnesses or suspects the abuse of an older person.	Elder abuse Seniors Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

Carers

More than 642,000 Queenslanders provide long-term, unpaid care for someone with disability, a long-term health condition or an older person.

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2008*, recognises the valuable contribution by carers to the people they care for; the benefit, including the social and economic benefit, provided by carers to the community; provides for the interests of carers to be considered in decisions about the provision of services that impact on the role of carers; and establishes the Carers Advisory Council. It also provides the Queensland Carers Charter.

The Queensland Carers Action Plan 2024-2026 recognises the significant disability reform agenda and development of the National Carer Strategy, and the importance of this work for Queensland carers. It focuses work in four priority areas:

Advising on and advocating for systemic change for carers

- Advising on and advocating for recognition for carers
- Advising on and advocating for services for carers
- Maximising the impact and effectiveness of QCAC.

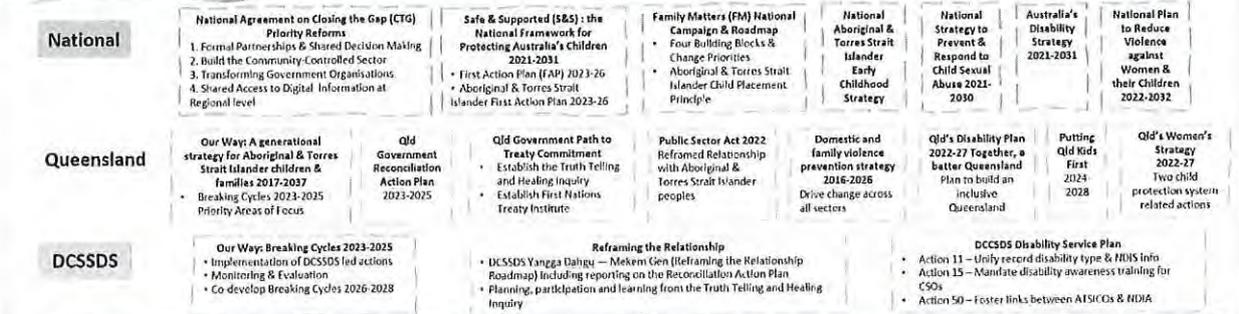
Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Queensland Carers Action Plan 2024-2026	The <i>Carers Action Plan</i> recognises the significant disability reform agenda and development of the National Carer Strategy, and the importance of this work for Queensland carers, identifying 4 priority areas to advance the interests of carers in the reform processes.	Carers Action Plan Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)
Queensland Carers Charter	All Queensland Government departments and statutory bodies must promote and support the principles of the <i>Queensland Carers Charter</i> , when providing services and supporting staff.	Queensland Carers Charter
Queensland Carers Advisory Council	The Queensland Carers Advisory Council (QCAC) is established under the <i>Carers (Recognition) Act 2008</i> to provide advice to the Minister on work to promote the interests of carers and makes recommendations to support carer recognition. The council consists of twelve members, including four unpaid carers, one of whom is a grandparent-carer, three representing carer organisations that support carers and four representatives from Queensland Government departments.	Queensland Carers Advisory Council Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)
Time for Grandparents	The department funds the Time for Grandparents program to deliver telephone support, advice, assistance and programs for grandparents raising grandchildren in Queensland.	"Time for Grandparents" scheme to support state's unpaid child minders - Ministerial Media Statements

Other Frameworks

Title	Summary	Link (if available)
Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF)	<p>HSQF is a Queensland Government framework setting quality standards for NGOs funded to deliver human services. Organisations in-scope of certification are required to achieve and maintain certification against the Human Services Quality Standards (the standards).</p> <p>The Human Services Quality Standards (the standards) set a benchmark for the quality of service provision. Each standard is supported by a set of performance indicators, which outline what an organisation will be assessed against in order to show they meet the standard.</p> <p>The HSQF applies to a range of human service providers delivering services in Queensland including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisations funded to deliver human services under service agreements, or other specified arrangements, with the following participating Queensland Government departments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts (DTATSIPCA) ○ Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) ○ Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) • organisations funded to deliver child protection placement services in-scope of licensing under an Individualised Placement and Support Agreement (IPSA) with DCSSDS • organisations funded by Queensland Health use HSQF to meet quality requirements. 	Human Services Quality Framework Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (dcssds.qld.gov.au)
Guide Hearing and Assistance Dogs (GHAD)	<p>A guide, hearing or assistance dogs is a dog trained to perform identifiable physical task and behaviours to assist a person with a disability to reduce the person's need for support.</p> <p>Twenty-four individual trainers or training institutions of guide, hearing or assistance dogs are approved under the <i>Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009</i> (Qld).</p>	Guide, hearing and assistance dogs People with disability Queensland Government (www.qld.gov.au)

Appendix 1

Child & Family Strategic Reform Framework Policy Context Overview



Track progress against National, Queensland and departmental priority targets and outcomes, and measure what departmental leaders & staff will do to enable system, practice & behavioural improvements & benefits

Contribution to National, Queensland & DCSSDS Targets & Outcomes Reporting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTG Target A2: By 2031, reduce the rate of new recruitments to child by 30% • FM: Enhance user representation in policy development by 2018 • S&S Actions 1,2,5,6,8 & CAP Actions 1,7,8 (Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy) • QW Target: Eliminate the abuse of forced responses through the child protection system by 2027 • DCSSDS Target 2: Increase participation of children & young people's knowledge by 2026 • DCSSDS Target 5: All Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children & young people participate in their own identity and healing journeys by 2026 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S&S Actions 1 (actions 1 & 8) Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy • Australia's Disability Strategy - Action 1.4 (enhance state collection of information on disability in OHC & A&D) Budget & financial use of health care services • Queensland Women's Strategy - Increase support for government organisations to deliver community based out of school child safety systems, contribute to outcomes from QW Strategy (improved mental health for families, improved protection systems) • DCSSDS Target 5: Increase the proportion of children & young people in their own identity and healing journeys by 2026 • Disability Service Plan - The State EE - 100% operational by 2026 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTG Priority Reforms 1-4: Report to Productivity Commission (CTG national data dashboard & Annual Data Group) (2026) • S&S Actions 1,7,8 & CAP Actions 2,4,8 (Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy) • Qld Gov Path to Treaty Commitment Report - Measurement, Accountability & Commitment - Path to Treaty (including Healing Inquiry, Research, Policy, Practice, and Engagement) to the First Peoples' Bill of Rights, Reconciliation and Learning Plan • DCSSDS Target 6: Visualise and improve the operational capability of the department, with some enhanced reporting (Report to the Public Sector Learning Unit)
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C. Any broad categories of historical documents or data the Department holds relevant to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

The information in the tables below provides an overview of the broad categories of historical documents and data held by Child Safety and Seniors, Disability and Carers parts of the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services. Provisions regarding the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services' (department) accountability requirements for creating and managing its records have changed over time with various legislative frameworks.

Information about key systems used by Seniors, Disability and Carers is also provided. The department has a small holding of records related to the Multicultural Affairs portfolio, however these primarily relate to the immigration and sponsorship of migrants to Queensland only.

Child safety-related records information includes those held at Queensland State Archives (QSA). However, Seniors, Disability and Carers-related records information does not include those held at QSA. Information on QSA record holdings for Seniors, Disability and Carers can be provided if required.

Disclaimer: An index of the department's record holdings does not exist in any meaningful or robust format and cannot be developed due to the quantity and breadth of the record holdings and the quality of the metadata. The department's ability to search and retrieve specific documents and data for the Inquiry will be impacted by the limitation of complete and reliable indexes, quality of meta data and the quantity and quality of the records holdings. To overcome these barriers and apply searches that yield the appropriate records, it will be helpful for the department to understand the type and intent of requests for historical documents and data the Inquiry is seeking. This will greatly assist the department to support the Inquiry to fulfil its functions.

Child Safety

Records Management

Many of the department's records noted in the table below were and are subject to various legislative provisions and protections, including those under the *Child Protection Act 1999*. Accordingly, access to records will vary depending on the relevant legislative protections. The department generally cannot release child safety client files in their entirety to the individual about whom the records relate. Consideration will need to be given regarding the extent to which these materials can or should be produced to the Inquiry, if required.

The department can only work with limited data when locating documents relating to a specific subject matter, including the name of a client, the name of a mother and key terms. Departmental staff can only search the naming convention used in a file's title and relevant date range information are unreliable. To identify files through any single search term, it is often necessary to pull in large volumes of materials that have 'suspected' relevance and manually review each file.

Historical recordkeeping practice did not consistently capture cultural information. To determine whether an individual's cultural identity was recorded, a thorough examination of each client record held by the department would be required. Additionally, the accuracy of this information would depend on the type of information recorded during the individual's association with the department and the source of this information.

Child Safety Performance Reporting and Analytics (Data)

The department holds corporate data related to the "separation of children, or other family members, from their families" in the form of de-identified data regarding the number of children admitted to and in care. De-identified data on children in care is available from 2007 onwards.

Prior to 2007 (between 1999 and 2006) the department has access to some Excel files from the legacy system prior to ICMS (the department's current electronic child protection database).

Other information that may be requested by the Inquiry that is not available from these data sets and Excel files may be sourced from the corporate data warehouse (which includes data from ICMS, the current Integrated Client Management System and the pre-ICMS system).

Additional performance data is publicly available via the Our Performance website: [Our Performance \(dcssds.qld.gov.au\)](http://dcssds.qld.gov.au).

This includes data series covering family support services, working with families in contact with child safety statutory functions, care and post care support and meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.



Broad categories of historical documents or data held in relation to Child Safety

<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<p>Client files – child safety</p> <p>Evidence of interactions with vulnerable persons, including child safety materials such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client files generally in the child or mother's name – including Family 'F' files (client records for a family unit contained across one or more files), intake files, CA case management files, crisis care files, court files, family group meeting files, health care files, head office files, placement and support files, therapeutic and behaviour support files, ongoing intervention files, Investigation and Assessment files, Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Files (involving QHealth, Queensland Police Services and Department of Education 	<p>From the commencement¹ of the department to the current era</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations iDocs (current Information Management System) Electronic databases Queensland State Archives 	<p>The department is unable to conclusively ascertain the volume of materials held and has more than 10 million items in its collection of child safety client information relevant to current matters (electronic and hard copy).</p> <p>The department is unable to ascertain whether records (hard copy, and in some cases, electronic) in the agency's holdings relate to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples without first examining each client file and identifying whether cultural information has been recorded.</p> <p>To effectively search for historical records regarding a particular person, the department requires the name and date of birth of the individual, their mother's name and any other contextual information that can be provided to accurately identify the record. For all matters, the metadata available in the records management system does not reliably include information about the timeframe to which the record relates.</p> <p>The retrieval process requires manual retrieval of boxes of files from offsite storage. As files regarding an individual are not kept</p>

¹ Information regarding the age of files is not kept in the department's record keeping system, so it is not possible to ascertain the exact date range of records held. Records seen by departmental staff commence from the late 1800s and have generally been miscellaneous documents.



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<p>information sharing and finance files.)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional records, which may include information about multiple children. For example, admission books, discharge registers, and observation records.* Foster carer files in the foster carer's name, including foster mother files, approved person files, case management and approval files, finance files and screening files.* Collection of Infant Life Protection records/files. <p>* Some of these terms are only relevant to a particular era and are not applicable to all the child safety record holdings of the department.</p>			<p>in discrete boxes, the files relevant to the individual will need to be manually removed from the boxes for any production process.</p> <p>The department currently regularly uses client files for multiple purposes, including formal information access, administrative release matters, subpoena production, search warrants, and personal injuries proceedings matters, and for the purposes of managing responses to the Commonwealth for the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse.</p> <p>Please note the department lost a significant volume of records due to damage caused by the 1974 floods, including child safety client files and a smaller amount of adoption records.</p>
<p>Client files - adoptions</p> <p>Client files for matters relevant to functions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoptions services 	<p>From the commencement of the department to the current era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations 	<p>Of the Adoptions holdings, it is estimated that more than 25,000 items include client record information. It is noted that paper records held prior to September 1979 for adoption matters no</p>



Description of records <i>Provides a high level description of record held.</i>	Date range <i>Estimated date range of described record.</i>	Storage Location <i>e.g., iCMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</i>	Relevant information <i>High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iDocs (current Information Management System) • Electronic databases • Queensland State Archives 	<p>longer exist in paper form, having been microfilmed and subsequently destroyed.</p> <p>The department has no ability to ascertain whether materials relate to individuals who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander without examining each individual record.</p> <p>The department lost some adoptions records in the 1974 floods.</p>
Information regarding significant matters			
<p>Records relating to significant high-level advice provided or received by the agency on substantial aspects of agency functions, responsibilities, obligations and liabilities. Records regarding historical matters of significance are limited.</p> <p>Records may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • claims against the department • briefing notes • development of advice • advice to other agencies • Possible Parliamentary Questions 	<p>From the commencement of the department to the current era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations • iDocs (current Information Management System) • Electronic databases • Queensland State Archives 	<p>The department has significant holdings. Recordkeeping practices have changed considerably over the last 150 years. This has significantly impacted the metadata that is captured to identify records, resulting in inconsistent metadata to search and draw from.</p> <p>There is no single search of the department's currently available metadata that will conclusively or adequately identify items within the department's holdings that are relevant to paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. Additionally, it is not possible to use the current system to accurately identify the era to which the documents relate unless the date the document was generated is included in the title of the registered file.</p>



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet materials, including Estimates briefs. <p>Significant reports may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic level reports relating to the agency's core functions and performance • those with whole-of-government implications • annual reports of the agency • matters relating to Parliamentary business. 			
<p>Agreements and contracts</p>			
<p>Records relating to agreements and contracts.</p> <p>Significant agreements and contracts may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all agreements and contracts with the State • transfer of government or agency responsibilities, functions, obligations or 	<p>From the commencement of the department to the current era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations • iDocs (current Information Management System) • Electronic databases • Queensland State Archives 	<p>The department holds many historical licensing documents, however, changes in record keeping practices and the 1974 floods have impacted the retention of these materials.</p> <p>Due to search limitations, it is difficult to quantify the department's holdings of agreements, contracts, service agreements, and licensing materials, but it is estimated the collection far exceeds 100,000 items.</p> <p>A limitation of the department's current search functionality is that it is only possible to search for contracts or licences relating</p>



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<p>liabilities (e.g. machinery-of-government changes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service agreements engaging non-government entities to perform the agency's functions. <p>Records may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contract negotiations • service agreements* • reviews of agreements • licensing documents.* <p>*Many of these items will include arrangements with non-government organisations (including faith-based organisations).</p>			<p>to individual institutions by the official business name of the organisation. Often, the metadata relating to the contract's years of operation is not captured.</p>
<p>Advisory bodies and committees</p> <p>Records establishing the bodies and correspondence, agendas, briefing materials, and minutes.</p>	<p>From the commencement of the department to the current era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations • iDocs 	<p>The agency is not able to ascertain the volume or subject matter of the department's current holdings relevant to this item with certainty. However, the agency can undertake extensive searches if the name of the committee or advisory body/board is provided.</p>



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., iCMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<p>Policy and procedure documents Records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports that refer to child protection functions • 1969 – 1987 Director’s circulars • 1985 – 1987 Administrative circulars • 1987 – 1995 Administrative memorandums • 1987 – 2001 Policy, practice, and procedure memorandums • 2002 – Child safety rescinded policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports from 1867 • Policy documents from 1969 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations • iDocs • Queensland State Archive 	<p>A search of relevant terms returned 70,000 potential items that would require individual examination to determine relevance.</p> <p>There are no centralised list or holdings of documents or files provided to previous inquiries or commissions.</p>
<p>Complaints matters Records relating to the management of complaints, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statements • investigations and responses • correspondence 	<p>Miscellaneous but mostly modern era for discrete ‘complaints records’.</p> <p>In 2020, the department commenced a new First</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility - various locations • iDocs • Electronic databases 	<p>Gaps exist in annual reports between 1866 – 1867, in addition to other incomplete reports.</p> <p>A list of various policy documents and titles from 1969 is available, though not all policy documents are still held by the department.</p> <p>The department has more than 8,000 items related to policy matters. However, it is not currently possible to ascertain whether the subject matter is directly relevant to the Inquiry’s Terms of Reference.</p>
<p>Over the many eras in which the department with responsibility for child safety has existed, complaints management practice has varied.</p> <p>For many earlier matters, documents associated with the receipt of a complaint, and the management of the complaint are</p>			



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complaints forms. 	<p>Attempt at Resolution (FAAR) process. For these matters, there is a reliable centralised complaint record held with a discrete unit responsible for complaints.</p> <p>Prior to this date, complaints were often managed as part of case management and recorded in many locations, including individual client files.</p>		<p>recorded in the client files of the individual, i.e., in the file associated with the child or young person who made the complaint. This individualised type of search creates additional complexity when attempting to identify documents regarding a particular systemic issue.</p> <p>Some complaints matters are entwined with notifications of harm to a child and are associated with the decision to intervene. Consequently, this information will be recorded in confidential case files.</p> <p>Without individual examination, it is not possible to determine whether the people involved in complaints matters identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.</p> <p>To adequately search for a complaint matter, the following information is required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name of the child to whom the complaint relates - information could be located in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> client files complaints files/databases name of the staff members about whom the complaint relates together with the child's name - information could be located in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant client files complaints files/databases



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g. iCMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility.</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o personnel records and investigation/professional standards records of the staff members (if relevant) • name of organisation, including information regarding the location of the organisation - information could be located in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o complaints files/database o licensing and contract information for the organisation o any other investigation files using searches for the name of the institution.
<p>Master control records Master control records that provide meaning, context, and access to permanent value records. Includes data from agency recordkeeping applications, databases used for departmental business and case file registers. Also includes events logged by business/software applications where these are the only source of recordkeeping metadata that relate to information of permanent value.</p>	<p>From the commencement of the department to the current era.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iDocs • Electronic databases • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations 	<p>The department has significant information assets, though the holdings are unquantifiable.</p> <p>In terms of records management, the iDocs system records current electronic and hard copy holdings. Still, other electronic business systems are utilised throughout the department that also capture information pertinent to the terms of reference.</p> <p>iDocs holds more than 45 million items, and for historical child protection matters, case file registers are available to identify the family files of families involved with the department. For context, the last entry in an F file register (typically referred to as a Family File), the hard copy register used to identify child protection files associated with a particular family number, was</p>



<p>Description of records Provides a high level description of record held.</p>	<p>Date range Estimated date range of described record.</p>	<p>Storage Location e.g. (CMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility).</p>	<p>Relevant information High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges).</p>
			<p>dated in 2000. However, generally, F file registers relate to matters prior to 1996.</p>
<p>Files returned to the department by non-government organisations</p>			
<p>In accordance with contemporary contracts, non-government organisations (NGO) engaged to perform child safety services are required to return service users' client files when certain conditions are met, such as when the service user reaches 18 years of age.</p>	<p>While some historical files are held, most NGO records relate to matters after 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic documents • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations 	<p>Currently, the department holds more than 19,000 client files returned by non-government organisations performing child safety-related services. These files contain personal information about the service user. Cultural identity can generally only be ascertained by reviewing the documents in the file or searching current departmental electronic databases for further information about the individual.</p>

Broad categories of historical documents or data held in relation to Seniors, Disability and Carers

The following table includes a description of various record holdings the department has access to and/or has created. It does not include records that have been transferred and held at Queensland State Archives facility.

The following records are subject to various legislative provisions and protections including those under the *Disability Services Act 2006*, the *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009*, the *Forensic Disability Act 2011*, the *Right to Information Act 2009*, *Public Records Act 2002* (and Public Records Act 2023 from 5 December 2024) and *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Access to records will vary depending on the relevant legislation.

Description of records <i>Provides a high level description of record held or system used for record keeping</i>	Date range <i>Estimated date range of described record or system</i>	Storage Location <i>e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility</i>	Relevant information <i>High level description of relevant information for inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges)</i>
Clients			
Client files for matters relevant to functions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability services • Seniors 	From the commencement of the department to the current era.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain Storage Facility – various locations • iDocs (current Information Management System) • Electronic databases 	<p>It is estimated that, of the department's regional disability services holdings, more than 600,000 items hold client information.</p> <p>The department has no ability to ascertain whether materials relate to individuals who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander without examining each individual record.</p>
Disability Accommodation Client Management System (DACMS)	Commenced 2018 post Business Information System (BIS)	Online database	<p>Dedicated case management system for Accommodation Support and Respite Services clients. Most direct care/individual records are paper based.</p> <p>In addition, for Accommodation Support and Respite Services the department has a suite of policies and procedures governing the delivery of services to its participants.</p>
Critical Incident Management System (CIRMS)	Current	Online incident management hub	Employee incident reporting system used whilst providing in-person care support.

Description of records <i>Provides a high level description of record held or system used for record keeping</i>	Date range <i>Estimated date range of described record or system</i>	Storage Location <i>e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility</i>	Relevant information <i>High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges)</i>
Disability Worker Screening Portal	Current	Online portal	Portal related to disability worker screening.
RESOLVE – Content Management System (for recording enquiries and complaints)	2018 - current	Content Management System	Client complaint or enquiry, department, or minister's office – customer complaints regarding Disability, Seniors & Carers.
RESOLVE – Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs (for recording trainer applications)	Current	Content Management System	Maintains profiles for trainers and handlers and puppy carers. Handlers' identity cards <i>Guide, Hearing & Assistance Act 2009 &</i> record enquiries and complaints.
Online Data Collection Portal (ODC)	Current	Data base	Used by disability service providers to record details of restrictive practices authorisations.
SharePoint – Content Management System	Current	Content Management System	Content Management System
Paper based files (regional and central storage and archived) – historical	Historical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron Mountain storage facility • Brisbane Central Office • Regional offices and outlets 	Paper based records for clients which document care and support services, including daily notes, medical information and all records related to the delivery of direct care and supports.
Non-Government Organisations			
Grant Management System (GMS) – legacy database	Current	Content Management System	Used to store grant applications from NGOs applying to specific grant rounds
Procure to Invest (P2i)	Current	Content Management System	Used to store contracts and receive data from contracted NGOs
Corporate data holdings			
iDocs	2022-current	Centrally	This is the departments record keeping system for corporate records.



Description of records <i>Provides a high level description of record held or system used for record keeping</i>	Date range <i>Estimated date range of described record or system</i>	Storage Location <i>e.g., ICMS/online database, Iron Mountain Storage facility</i>	Relevant information <i>High level description of relevant information for Inquiry (i.e., volume of records held, accessibility challenges)</i>
Mincor	2016-current	Database	Internal Ministerial Communication Platform
U:/ drive	Pre 2022-23	Centrally	Records transitioned from U:/ drive to iDocs during 2022-23.

D. Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 - CHILD SAFETY RESPONSE

Work, tasks, goals or actions allocated to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety) pursuant to findings or recommendations made by any previous inquiry or commission since 2010 that directly relates to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

Types of inquiries and commissions detailed in this document:

1. State Inquiries and Commissions.
2. National Royal Commissions.
3. Coronial Inquests following the death of a child in care where system level recommendations were made.

Additional formative reviews and reports detailed in this document:

4. Reports published by the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC), which make system level findings or recommendations relating to the functions and service delivery of Child Safety.
5. Child Death Review Board Annual Reports.
6. Queensland Ombudsman reports.
7. Queensland Audit Office reports.
8. Family Matters Annual Reports.

Please note, for ease the below information refers to 'Child Safety', when referring to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (and its former iterations) (the department), and the child protection and family support system.

CAVEATS TO NOTE:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experience the entire continuum of family support and statutory child protection services. For this reason, all findings and recommendations relating to the child protection system that meet the criteria of the request have been included.
- In addition to previous inquiries and commissions, findings from formative reviews that relate to Child Safety functions (listed in Tables 4-8) have been included for the purpose of highlighting relevant findings and systems level recommendations that have shaped and continue to shape the current child protection and family support system in Queensland. In some cases, these additional reviews refer to recommendations associated more broadly with kinship care, culturally safe and responsive practice, and intervention, as well as specifically seeking to address the disproportionate representation of, and the outcomes for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system (across all jurisdictions); thereby holding relevance to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
- The department has implemented recommendations resulting from several reports and reviews that have not been published publicly (for example, the 2019 QFCC report 'A spotlight on vulnerable infants: improving responses to red flags'). Information on reports that are not public have not been included in this document.

Inquiries and Commissions since 2010

1. State Inquiries and Commissions

Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Carmody Inquiry)	
Inquiry or Commission	2012 – 2013
Year	
Key focus	The Carmody Inquiry was established to review Queensland's child protection system, review progress of outcomes related to the 1999 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions (the Forde Inquiry) and the 2004 Crime and Misconduct Commission Inquiry, and to chart a new roadmap for child protection for the next decade.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety, and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Carmody Inquiry made 121 recommendations, of which Child Safety led or co-led 82 recommendations.</p> <p>The Queensland Government accepted 115 recommendations in full and a further six in-principle. The Queensland Government response to the Carmody Inquiry final report can be found at: Response.pdf (cabinet.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>Recommendations focused on the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverting families from the statutory system • Designing a new family support system for children and families • Child protection and the non-government service sector in Queensland • A new practice framework for Queensland • Options for children in out-of-home care • Transitioning from care • Child protection workforce • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and the child protection system • Oversight and complaints • Courts and tribunals • Child protection legislation • Implementing the Child Protection Reform Roadmap
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce	
Inquiry or Commission	
Year	2022
Key focus	The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (WSJT) was established as an independent, consultative taskforce by the Queensland Government to examine coercive control and review the need for a specific offence of domestic violence, and the experience of women across the criminal justice system.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The WSJT delivered two reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hear her voice – Report one – Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland 2. Hear her voice – Report two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system <p>Two recommendations from Report One were relevant to and led or co-led by Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 12: The Queensland Government expand the availability of respectful relationships programs for young people who are not engaged in formal education. Appropriately modified respectful relationships education will be developed and implemented in services and organisations that support vulnerable young people in locations and modes that are accessible and engaging for this cohort. ▪ Recommendation 22: The department continue to implement and embed a practice framework and tools that support Child Safety staff to work in partnership to support a victim of domestic and family violence to care protectively for their children, and to hold perpetrators accountable to stop the violence, including by providing ongoing training to staff. The practice framework and tools will be reviewed to ensure they recognise and respond to coercive control and patterns of violence over time in the context of a relationship as a whole and are based on current evidence. The department will proactively work to remove barriers to victims seeking help and support that relate to fears that children will be removed from a protective parent, including building trust and demonstrating partnership with families and communities and fully implementing the practice approach and tools. <p>Further information on the recommendations can be found here: volume-1-executive-summary-and-introduction.pdf (womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>The Queensland Government response to Hear her voice – Report one can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

2. National Royal Commissions

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)	
Inquiry or Commission	Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission)
Year	2013 – 2017
Key focus	The Royal Commission's key focus was to inquire into institutional responses to allegations and incidents of child sexual abuse and related matters, with a focus on identifying what institutions and governments should do to better protect children against child sexual abuse and related matters in institutional contexts in the future.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Royal Commission made a total of 409 recommendations.</p> <p>Child Safety led or co-led a total of 152 recommendations, which included leading on 73 recommendations from the Royal Commission's Redress and Civil Litigation Report and leading one recommendation from the Royal Commission's Criminal Justice Report.</p> <p>Several recommendations related specifically to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 9.2: The Australian Government and state and territory governments should fund Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing approaches as an ongoing, integral part of advocacy and support and therapeutic treatment service system responses for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. These approaches should be evaluated in accordance with culturally appropriate methodologies, to contribute to evidence of best practice. • Recommendation 12.8: Each state and territory government should adopt a model of assessment appropriately tailored for kinship/relative care. This type of assessment should be designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) better identify the strengths as well as the support and training needs of kinship/relative carers b) ensure holistic approaches to supporting placements that are culturally safe c) include appropriately resourced support plans. • Recommendation 12.2: Each state and territory government, in consultation with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community representatives, should develop and implement plans to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fully implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle 2. improve community and child protection sector understanding of the intent and scope of the principle 3. develop outcome measures that allow quantification and reporting on the extent of the full application of the principle, and evaluation of its impact on child safety and the reunification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with their families 4. invest in community capacity building as a recognised part of kinship care, in addition to supporting individual carers, in recognition of the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in bringing up children. <p>Information and status of relevant recommendations can be found in the Queensland Government fifth annual progress report</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) AND Independent Review National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Review)	
Inquiry or Commission	Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) AND Independent Review National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Review)
Year	2019 - 2023
Key focus	<p>The Disability Royal Commission was established in response to community concern about the widespread reports of violence against, and the neglect, abuse and exploitation of, people with disability. The Disability Royal Commission investigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preventing and better protecting people with disability from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation • achieving best practice in reporting, investigating and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability • promoting a more inclusive society that supports people with disability to be independent and live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. <p>The NDIS Review looked at the design, operation and sustainability of the NDIS and the way to make the NDIS market and workforce more responsive, supportive and sustainable.</p>

<p>Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission</p>	<p>The Disability Royal Commission Report made 222 recommendations, and the NDIS Review Report made 26 recommendations and had 139 supporting actions. There is significant overlap in the findings and recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission and the NDIS Review, which is why they are presented here together.</p> <p>Disability Royal Commission recommendations relevant to Child Safety include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 6.36 – Restrictive Practices: Take immediate action to provide that certain restrictive practices must not be used. • Recommendation 9.1 – Culturally Appropriate parenting capacity assessments: Co-design clear principles and guidelines for parenting capacity assessments for First Nations parents with disability. • Recommendation 9.2 – Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Ensure all First Nations children up to 5 years of age coming into out-of-home care are screened using the culturally adapted developmental screening <i>Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Talking about Raising Aboriginal Kids (ASQ-TRAK)</i> tool. • Recommendation 11.17 – National reportable conduct schemes: States and Territories where not already in place establish a reportable conduct scheme in accordance with recommendation 7.9 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse. • Recommendation 11.18 – Dual oversight of reportable conduct incidents: Develop guiding principles and consistent material. • Recommendation 12.8 – National Disability Data Asset (NDDA): Commit to long-term support to the National Disability Data Asset. • Public Hearing 33 Recommendation 3 – Mandatory Reporting: Review section 13E of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (QLD) to consider if it should apply to all Queensland Police. • Public Hearing 33 Recommendation 4 – Independent advocacy services: Expand the operation of the Child Advocate scheme to provide advocacy services to children and young people with disability who are at risk of entering the child protection system.
<p>Caveats and limitations</p>	<p>NDIS Review recommendation relevant to Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 2.7: increase and improve the connection between mainstream services and the NDIS. <p>N/A</p>

3. Coronial Inquests following the death of a child in care

Queensland Coronial Inquest – "S"	
Inquest Year	2012
Key focus	Inquest following the death of a 10 year old child who was struck by a car in Rockhampton and suffered fatal injuries. 'S' was subject to a custody order with the department and had absconded from her residential placement on the day of her death.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Inquest made 12 recommendations. Recommendations included that the department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review its processes in placing a child in residential care outside of a service agreement, including that a management plan be developed between the department and residential care facility to closely monitor the child's progress especially during the period before the first departmental review of the placement and that be put in place prior to the placement of the child (page 51, item 1). Develop a field in ICMS which records any past conflict/relationship issues between other children and/or past carers which is easily accessible by staff for reasons including placement decisions (page 51, item 2). Review its processes concerning seeking feedback from carers following a placement and implement a mechanism of feedback by providing carers with a feedback sheet which is stored in a place easily accessible for staff to relay information to future carers and in order to take that information into account for future placements of the child (page 51, item 3). Review its processes concerning reporting requirements by both home based carers and care facilities as to events occurring throughout the placement and reporting processes be streamlined in both instances (page 51, item 4). Ensure that as part of their supervision of child safety officers, team leaders or other appropriate personnel must review investigations undertaken of kinship care options and the timeframes set for renewed enquiries in that regard (page 51, item 5). Consider developing an audit tool for examining policies and procedures, internal communication, communication with the department and staff training of a start-up organisation which could be used by the CTMS in the initial phases of the commencement of a residential facility (page 52, item 12). <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of S</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Queensland Coronial Inquest – CHILD, FAITH	
Inquest Year	2014
Key focus	Eight year old child beaten to death by her mother.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>Recommendations relating to Child Safety, included that the department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to notifications from Department of Education, Training and Employment with additional specified information. Consider updating its practice manual to mandate the practice that when a child concern report is recorded at a Regional Intake Service and relates to a notification which has been closed for less than 30 days to email the information to the appropriate child safety officer. Include in its service agreements with Intensive Family Support Services the requirement that case closures on the basis of non-engagement are notified to the referrer. Notify every party to a current Service Agreement which utilises the Community Sector Information System (CSIS) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the department does not have access to personal client information or identified information on CSIS. information entered into CSIS by service providers is not accessible by the department; and the department is only able to view referral information for families referred by Child Safety Services. Improve information sharing across Centrelink, Education, Queensland Police and Queensland Health. Consider launching a public awareness campaign, particularly in Far North Queensland, promoting the fact that child protection is the responsibility of every member of our community and the role of the department in supporting families rather than removing children from those families. <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of a child, Faith</p>

Caveats and limitations	N/A
Inquest	Queensland Coronial Inquest – 'A', a 6 year old child
Year	2015
Key focus	Child in care drowned in foster carer's swimming pool.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>Relevant recommendations related to Child Safety, included that the department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Child Safety Practice Manual (CSPM) to require staff to record the swimming ability of all children, where known, in the Child Information Form. • Update the CSPM to encourage the provision of swimming lessons to all children residing in a placement where there is a pool or water hazard. • Consider updating the CSPM to require that the Placement Agreement for all placements where a child is in residence with a pool or water hazard articulates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ how the risk of drowning will be managed by both foster carers and the department, including how the child will be supervised ◦ the child's ability to swim ◦ whether swimming lessons are required. • Require foster care agencies to provide all support workers with training on identifying water hazards, water safety and appropriate levels of supervision of children around water. • Consider amending the Household Safety Study form to include a requirement that water safety and supervision is discussed with foster carers and a handout on water safety be provided to foster carers at the time of completing the form. <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of A, a 6 year old child</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Inquest	Queensland Coronial Inquest – Inquest into the death of death of JE and JJ
Year	2015
Key focus	Inquest following the death of JE (16) and JJ (15) by suicide in 2008. JE and his family were known to the department from 2000. There was no active order in place at time of death but there were concerns about his family regarding drugs, chroming and alcohol. JJ suicide occurred on 20 December 2008 in the same location as his friend had died in September 2008.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>No recommendations made applicable to the department but the following comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were signs that the families of both young men were struggling to cope very early in their lives. The inquest did not examine in detail the child protection response of the agencies in contact with their families at that time. However, I agree with the conclusion of the Child Death Review Committee that the cumulative effect of missed opportunities may have adversely affected the department's service delivery. This applies to both deaths. <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of JE and JJ</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Queensland Coronial Inquest – 13 year old girl (P)	
Inquest Year	2015
Key focus	Inquest following the death of a 13 year old girl in residential care facility after stealing the carer's car keys and crashing vehicle. Focus on Positive Behaviour Support Policy and how carers can safely restrain children if their safety is in imminent danger.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Inquest recommendations relevant to Child Safety, include that the department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with licensed care services to implement policies and procedures, including the introduction of technology such as tracking and PIN immobilisers, to ensure that children in care with complex needs are not able to take control of vehicles. • Review its Positive Behaviour Support policy to ensure that it provides more guidance in relation to the circumstances in which reactive restraint can be used, and the types of restraint permitted. The policy should also highlight the significant risks, including asphyxiation, posed to the wellbeing of persons being restrained by inappropriate restraint techniques. <p>Findings encouraged the Queensland Government to approach the implementation of all of the recommendations of the Carmody Report informed by an appreciation of the ongoing impact intergenerational trauma has on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: Findings of Inquest into the death of a 13 year old girl (P)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Queensland Coronial Inquest – Inquest into the death of Mason Jet Lee Final Report	
Inquest Year	2020
Key focus	Inquest following the death of Mason Jet Lee in 2016.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>Child Safety led or co-led six recommendations.</p> <p>Recommendations most relevant to Child Safety focused on permanency planning, and the operation of the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) team system. Other recommendations focused on inter-agency responses with Health and Police.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: Findings of inquest into the death of Mason Jet Lee (courts.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>The Queensland Government response can be found here: Queensland Government response to the death of Mason Jet Lee - Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Queensland Coronial Inquest – Greer	
Inquest Year	2023
Key focus	Inquest into the suspected death of Tina Louise Greer.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Inquest made four recommendations, with one recommendation relevant to Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 4: The department require all staff to complete mandatory face-to-face training on domestic and family violence informed practice. <p>Further information can be found here: Coroners Court of Queensland – Template 39</p>

Caveats and limitations	N/A
Inquest	Queensland Coronial Inquest – 13 year old boy
Year	2024
Key focus	Inquest following the death of a 13 year old boy in the care and custody of Child Safety under an interim Child Protection Order pursuant to the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> . The 13 year old child drowned at Cedar Creek Falls.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>The Inquest made three recommendations. Recommendations relating to Child Safety included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps to standardise, through a guideline or documented risk assessment procedure, the process by which service providers are to assess and report to the department on high-risk activities. • Consider making it mandatory for out of home care service providers to provide water awareness safety training to their frontline staff. <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of 13 year old boy (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	The Queensland Government response to this matter is currently under review.
Inquest	NSW Coronial Inquest – Baby Q
Year	2024
Key focus	Inquest following the death of Baby Q, a child known to child protection authorities, who died on 17 November 2018.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to Inquiry/Commission	<p>On 18 April 2024, the New South Wales Deputy State Coroner delivered her Findings of Inquest into the death of Baby Q. The Inquest made five recommendations, with two recommendations directed to both New South Wales and Queensland Governments, as both jurisdictions were engaged with the family.</p> <p>Recommendations relevant to Child Safety (Queensland):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: In situations where the department refer a family to a family well-being service in the course of an Investigation and Assessment, consideration be given to requiring the family well-being service (however described) to inform the department if the family disengages prematurely from the service and the reason for the disengagement. • Recommendation 2: That consideration be given to improving access for the department caseworkers to expert psychological opinion to help them assess risk to children, when working with a family with complex mental health needs. <p>Further information can be found here: Inquest into the death of Baby Q (nsw.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Additional formative reviews and reports since 2010 relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

4. Queensland Family and Child Commission

QFCC Report	When a child is missing – remembering Tiahleigh – a report into Queensland's children missing from out-of-home care
Year	2016
Key focus	Following the death of Tiahleigh Palmer in 2015, the Premier requested the QFCC undertake a broad whole-of-government systems review to ensure the child safety, education, health and police service system worked effectively and to assess whether everything possible was done when concerns were first raised about Tiahleigh's disappearance.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The review made 29 recommendations to achieve whole-of-government system improvements in responding to children missing or absent from their out-of-home care placement.</p> <p>Recommendations focused improving Queensland Government systems to ensure timely and coordinated responses to vulnerable children living in out-of-home care.</p> <p>The report made 29 recommendations associated with how the Queensland Government needed to respond to children missing from out-of-home care, many of which were relevant to Child Safety, with a focus on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of an overarching media strategy to support media coverage for missing children from out-of-home care • The development of a joint agency protocol for responding when a child is missing from out of home care • The development of a protocol for all schools to inform parents/guardians when a child is absent from school. <p>Details of all recommendations can be found here: Report.PDF (cabinet.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
QFCC Report	Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of Foster Care System
Year	2017
Key focus	Review of Queensland's foster care system, called for by the Premier following two separate events - the death of 12 year old girl Tiahleigh Palmer; and arrest of a Far North Queensland carer and a kinship carer in Brisbane.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made 42 recommendations, of which 33 recommendations were relevant to Child Safety, with a focus on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining public confidence in the foster care system • Strengthening carer assessment, approval or renewal • Strengthening safeguards for children • Implementation <p>Details of all recommendations can be found here: Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of Foster Care System</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Blue Card and Foster Care Systems Review - Report on Terms of Reference 5: Strengthening Capacity Across the Queensland Child Protection System	
QFCC Report	2017
Year	2017
Key focus	Report formed part of a review into the Blue Card and Foster Care systems. The Terms of Reference required the review to determine whether Child Safety Services within the department were operating effectively, including engaging with frontline staff through targeted consultation to determine any capacity issues or pressure points in meeting the safety needs of children in the child protection system.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made 14 recommendations for Child Safety, which focused on the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the right services are in the right places for the right people • Targeted increases in staffing • Targeted growth in specialist non-government services • Streamlining court-related processes • Greater collaboration across the system • Modernise the ICT system. <p>Details of all recommendations can be found here: cabinet.qld.gov.au/documents/2017/Jun/Apel/Attachments/Report.PDF</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Recommendation 28: Supplementary Review – a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services	
QFCC Report	2017
Year	2017
Key focus	<p>Recommendation 28 of the QFCC report <i>When a child is missing: Remembering Tiahleigh – a report into Queensland's children missing from out-of-home care (when a child is missing report)</i> required the QFCC to review legislation, policies and practices relating to information sharing to protect all children in regulated service environments.</p> <p>The QFCC's review in response to Recommendation 28 focuses specifically on regulated services provided from the home: foster and kinship care, family day care and stand-alone care services.</p>
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made 17 recommendations, with four recommendations relevant to Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Education and Training (DET) and Child Safety work with Blue Card Services to develop a consistent definition of 'regular visitor' for regulated home-based services to be included within the Working with Children (<i>Risk Management and Screening</i>) Act 2000. This should consider legislative amendments to require that changes to the blue card status of 'regular visitors' should be disclosed to the 'notifiable person'. • The DET and Child Safety mandate that 'regular visitors' to all regulated home-based services must hold a current blue card. • Child Safety updates its policies and procedures to require the consideration of other regulated services provided from the home during the initial foster or kinship carer assessment, upon renewal of carer certificates, and at the point of time carer information is updated. The DET updates its policies and procedures to require approved providers to consider other regulated services provided from the home when engaging family day care educators and at the point of time educator information is updated. • The DET and Child Safety update relevant policies and procedures outlining the range of risk management strategies to be followed, including increased monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ when information becomes known about the provision of more than one home-based service, and ◦ upon receipt of information from Blue Card Services about a suspect in a disqualifying offence. The DET should work with family day care regulators in other jurisdictions to establish and prescribe best practice for frequency of visits. This should be considered as part of its current work developing an improved risk-based framework for Queensland. <p>Further information can be found here: Recommendation 28 - Supplementary review.pdf (qfcc.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Seeking Safety: Keeping children safe when they remain at home during Child Safety interventions. A system review following the deaths of two young children	
QFCC Report	2021
Year	
Key focus	Review into the child and family support system's responses to children who are on an 'intervention with parental agreement'. Report outlines changes needed to respond better to these vulnerable children and families.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made two recommendations relating to Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department takes immediate action to eliminate practice non-compliance within the Child Safety Service Centre that dealt with this case to make sure all children on current interventions with parental agreement are safe. The department and Queensland Health commit to better assist professionals in making decisions in the best interests of children under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> revising Queensland Health child protection policies and guidelines to require use of the Child Protection Guide when making decisions to refer families for support or to report concerns to Child Safety revising its Child Safety Officer—Health Liaison booklet to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> require the Child Safety Officer (Health Liaison) to refer professionals to existing referral and reporting processes (including the Child Protection Guide) require the Child Safety Officer (Health Liaison) to provide relevant advice, within delegated authority, to help inform referrals or reports, including information about a family's history of non-engagement with supports include information relevant to assessing or responding to the health needs of a child at risk of harm or in need of protection, resulting from circumstances such as parent's use of ice or other drugs. <p>Further information can be found here: 5723T326-FF53.pdf (parliament.qld.gov.au) Queensland Government response can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Keeping children in focus - A systemic review of supports delivered to Queensland children and families during Intervention with Parental Agreement Review Report	
QFCC Report	2022
Year	
Key focus	Review looks at the use of Intervention with Parental Agreements. Over 190 stakeholders including parents and staff from community organisations and Child Safety Offices across Queensland shared their experiences and insights.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	The report identified five areas for improvement, which focus on policy, program and practice changes to improve how children remain at the centre of the intervention and families are empowered to reduce the level of risk to their children while they remain safe and together at home. Additional information can be found here: Keeping children in focus
Caveats and limitations	N/A

A thematic analysis of provisionally approved kinship carers who receive a subsequent Blue Card negative notice	
QFCC Report	2023
Year	
Key focus	QFCC undertook a thematic analysis of a group of 11 cases where a family had been assessed and provisionally approved to be a kinship carer by Child Safety, and subsequently assessed by Blue Card Services and received a negative notice. Report shares the findings of the thematic analysis.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work,	<p>The report made two recommendations to the Queensland Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the requirement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship carers, as defined in the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>, to hold a Blue Card if they are caring for children in their family.

<p>tasks goals or actions pursuant to report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain the existing departmental assessment and approval process, in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship carers, removing the provisional status period in the absence of the blue card condition. <p>The Queensland Government response to the report was tabled in Parliament on 12 June 2024 by the Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP, Attorney General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.</p> <p>More information: QFCC report can be found here. Queensland Government response can be found here.</p>
<p>Caveats and limitations</p>	<p>The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services is working with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General because the blue card requirement for kinship carers sits across the legislative portfolios of the Minister for Child Safety and the Attorney-General.</p>

5. Child Death Review Board Annual Reports

Key focus

On 1 July 2020, a new child death review model commenced which included the establishment of an independent Child Death Review Board (CDRB). The CDRB's role is to carry out systems reviews following the death of children connected to the child protection system. By 31 October each year the CDRB provides an annual report to the responsible Minister, currently the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, about its operations during the past financial year.

The report includes information about the CDRB's operations, research, systemic findings and recommendations made to improve the child protection system and mechanisms to prevent child deaths.

Report	Child Death Review Board Annual Report 2020-21
Year	2020-21
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The 2020-21 CDRB report made 10 recommendations, with five actions relevant to Child Safety including that the department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen its model of funded secondary services. • Improves its ability to undertake effective child protection history reviews at intake to support decisions about whether a child is suspected to be in need of protection. • Develops additional guidance for assessing cumulative harm. • Builds the capability of child safety officers on assessing whether a parent is 'able and willing', as it applies to making decisions about whether a parent can keep their child safe. • with Queensland Health address the ongoing barriers and enablers to seeking, weighting and engaging expert advice from health professionals (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health services). <p>The Queensland Government response can be found here.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: Child Death Review Board Annual Report 2020-21 (parliament.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Report	Child Death Review Board Annual Report 2021-22
Year	2021-22
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The 2021-22 CDRB report made six recommendations aimed at the Queensland Government as a whole. The recommendations focus on five areas which all relate to child safety:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workforce reform to ensure accessibility and delivery 2. Continuity of care for children with complex needs 3. Responding to domestic and family violence 4. Promoting the safety of infants and unborn children 5. Promoting the safety of children with a disability <p>The Queensland Government response can be found here.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: Child Death Review Board Annual Report 2021-22 (parliament.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Child Death Review Board Annual Report 2022-23	
Report Year	2022-23
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks, goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The 2022-23 CDRB report made four recommendations relevant to Child Safety, across the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the safety of children who are registered for home education. • Improving research on the needs of First Nations communities. • Strengthening Child Safety practice in response to parental substance and methamphetamine use. • Assisting workers to recognise and respond to parental deception. <p>The Queensland Government response can be found here.</p> <p>Further information can be found here: Annual Report 2022-2023 (parliament.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

6. Queensland Ombudsman reports

Report	Management of child safety complaints – first report
Year	2016
Key focus	An investigation into the child safety complaints management processes within the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made five recommendations for Child Safety. Recommendations were that the Director-General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take all necessary steps to ensure that all complaints, including those managed by Child Safety Service Centres, are appropriately captured, managed and reported in Departmental complaints data. • Take all necessary steps to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ a full review of data fields for the department's complaints management database is conducted and relevant categories aligned to the department's core business practices and best practice complaints handling process ◦ appropriate training is provided to all departmental officers with complaints handling responsibilities. • Alongside the Public Guardian, establish a protocol relating to how child safety issues raised by the Office of the Public Guardian are to be managed by the department. • Take appropriate steps to ensure that all entities providing child safety services on behalf of the department: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ understand the importance of complaints in ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of the child safety system in Queensland ◦ have adequate internal complaint handling mechanisms in place to receive, identify, record and resolve complaints in a timely way ◦ escalate serious or complex complaint matters to the department through its complaints management system mechanisms ◦ report all complaint issues and outcomes to the department on a regular basis • Ensure that the department take steps by 30 September 2016 to establish a system where the department is able to accurately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ evaluate and measure the performance of the child safety complaints management system ◦ identify trends in complaint issues ◦ identify potential systemic issues requiring rectification ◦ publicly report on complaints data as required by s.219A(3) of the Public Service Act <p>More information can be found here: Management_of_child_safety_complaints.pdf.aspx (ombudsman.qld.gov.au)</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Report	Management of child safety complaints – second report
Year	2020
Key focus	An investigation into the management of child safety complaints within the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The report made nine recommendations for Child Safety, in relation to the development of a reporting framework to identify systemic issues and opportunities for improvement emerging from complaints. Recommendations were that the Director-General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all complaints received at a Child Safety Service Centre (CSSC) are managed according to its complaints management system by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ providing further training to CSSC officers about the processes for identifying and recording complaints in the department's complaints management database and ◦ making CSSC offices responsible for entering complaints directly into the department's complaints management database. • Ensure that all contacts that meet the definition of complaint in the department's policy are recorded and responded to as complaints. Specifically, this should be done by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ amending the department's procedure to remove the term 'issue' and ◦ providing training to officers regarding the amended procedure and assessing matters as complaints in accordance with the policy • Ensure all complaints are decided in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard and, irrespective of the complexity of a complaint, the following occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ a decision, inclusive of findings, is formally communicated to the complainant and ◦ findings are made by the complaint decision-maker • the findings are recorded within the complaints management database against each complaint allegation identified by the department • Establish an internal review process that complies with the Australian/New Zealand Standard and ensures the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ the merits, as well as process, of an original decision can be reviewed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the officer undertaking the review is sufficiently empowered to set aside, remake or affirm a decision or provide another appropriate remedy and training is provided to decision-makers and a review of the department's complaints management guidelines is undertaken to ensure that officers are not declining internal reviews on improper grounds. o Ensure the complaints management policy and procedure are amended to provide a clear process for the management of complaints about funded services. Specifically, the policy and procedure should provide for accountability through identification of a single point of contact responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o coordinating the management of the complainant o communication of any findings to the complainant and o entry of the complaint findings into the complaints management database • Alongside the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) finalise the current review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) within six months and ensure the MoU incorporates processes that will ensure both agencies accurately record and monitor complaints referred by the OPG to the department. • Require decision-makers, in respect of complaints about practice decisions, to consider whether a Senior Practitioner review ought to be undertaken and provide guidance on how a Senior Practitioner review be incorporated in responding to a complaint. • Ensure the complaints management policy and procedure are amended to provide that a complaint decision-maker is to be clearly identified for each complaint and that the decision-maker has the appropriate delegation and positional authority. • Ensure that sustainable and consistent complaint management governance mechanisms are developed and implemented consistent with the Australian/New Zealand Standard. As a minimum these should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o regular reporting to senior management of complaint statistics o regular analysis of complaints to identify systemic or common issues and o mandatory reporting requirements (s 219A of the Public Service Act 2008). <p>More information can be found here: Management of child safety complaints – second report – Queensland Ombudsman</p>
<p>Caveats and limitations</p>	<p>N/A</p>

7. Queensland Audit Office reports

Managing child safety information	
QAO Report	2014-15
Year	Audit assesses whether Child Safety has been able to make sure that the right information is available only to the right people at the right time and in the right format.
Key focus	Audit made six recommendations for Child Safety to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a co-ordinated model that includes a holistic approach for information management and sharing across the entire child safety service chain. Implements contemporary information systems. Uses information available across organisational boundaries within the service chain to gain insights and improve service outcomes. Specifies the efficient and secure exchange of information as a key business requirement when selecting new systems or revising the existing system. Improves security within the existing environment. Develops security standards for services providers, which should be included in service agreements. <p>More information can be found here: Results of audit (qao.qld.gov.au)</p>
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Family support and child protection system	
QAO Report	2020-21
Year	Audit assessed how effectively Queensland public sector entities work together for the safety and wellbeing of Queensland children.
Key focus	Audit made three recommendations for Child Safety, in collaboration with family support services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish minimum service-level requirements based on better practice for engaging with families requiring support by intensive Family Support and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing services. It should tailor these requirements to the demographics of each region. Collaborate with family support services to monitor outcomes and increase consent rates and the quality of data captured in the Advice, Referrals and Case Management database. Automate the transfer of those child harm reports that do not meet the threshold for investigation, but the family may benefit from family support services between the Integrated Client Management System and the Advice, Referrals and Case Management database. <p>Further information can be found here: Family support and child protection system (Report 1: 2020-21) (qao.qld.gov.au)</p>
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence	
QAO Report	2022-23
Year	Audit examined how effectively state public sector entities keep people safe from domestic and family violence, prevent it from occurring, and rehabilitate perpetrators to minimise re-offending. The audit also assessed how the public sector coordinates with non-government domestic and family violence services.
Key focus	One recommendation was relevant to Child Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs develop strategies, resource, fund and identify suitable programs to provide support services specifically for children and young people exposed to domestic and family violence.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or	

actions pursuant to report	Further information can be found here: Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence (Report 5: 2022-23) (qao.qld.gov.au)
Caveats and limitations	N/A

8. Family Matters Annual Reports

The annual Family Matters report examines government actions to address the over-representation of and the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems across all jurisdictions. It highlights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions and calls on governments to support and invest in the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to lead on child wellbeing, development and safety responses for children. Recommendations from Family Matters reports are directed at all Australian governments.

Family Matters has identified four Building Blocks, underpinned by evidence, ethics and human rights, detailing systemic changes needed to eliminate disproportionate representation, as follows:

- **Building Block 1:** All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe, universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive.
- **Building Block 2:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.
- **Building Block 3:** Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive.
- **Building Block 4:** Governments and services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Family Matters reporting commenced in 2016.

Family Matters	Family Matters Annual Report 2016
Year	2016
Key focus	The 2016 Family Matters Report provides a baseline of data relevant to measuring the care, safety, development and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children across Australia.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The Report makes nine recommendations. The following recommendations are relevant to Child Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: Developing a national comprehensive strategy to redress the causes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child removal and improve child safety and well-being. • Recommendation 2: Increased proportional investment in prevention and early intervention services. • Recommendation 4: Investment in safe reunification programs across Australia. • Recommendation 5: Legislative and policy reform to strengthen representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities, families and children in decisions about child safety and removal. • Recommendation 6: Investment in service delivery by community-controlled organisations in line with self-determination. • Recommendation 7: A framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child well-being. • Recommendation 8: Development and publication of data to better measure causes and responses to over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. • Recommendation 9: State based Commissioners and peak bodies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. <p>More information can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Family Matters	Family Matters Annual Report 2017
Year	2017
Key focus	The 2017 Family Matters report found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families continue to be grossly over-represented in child protection and out-of-home care systems and to experience key indicators of social and economic disadvantage that contribute to entry and exit from out-of-home care. The report specifically considers how governments across Australia are integrating the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in policies and practices.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The Report makes eight recommendations relevant to Child Safety, focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: Development of a national comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Strategy. • Recommendation 2: Increased proportional investment in evidence-informed and culturally supportive early intervention. • Recommendations 3, 5 and 6: Sustainable funding for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation Sector providing service delivery, family violence response and prevention. • Recommendation 4: Development of National Standards to embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 7: Development and publication of data to identify existing gaps and measures. • Recommendation 8: Establishment of state-based Commissioners and peak bodies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. <p>More information can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Family Matters Annual Report 2018	
Year	2018
Key focus	The 2018 Family Matters report puts a spotlight on primary prevention measures in the early years of children's lives.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The Report makes nine recommendations relevant to Child Safety, focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: Development of a national comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Strategy. • Recommendation 2: A target and strategy to increase proportional investment in evidence-informed and culturally supportive early intervention. • Recommendation 3: A target and strategy to Close the Gap in development outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the early years. • Recommendation 4: Priority investment in service delivery by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations. • Recommendation 5: Development of National Standards to embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle. • Recommendation 6: Removing permanent care orders and adoption for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. • Recommendation 7: Development of a National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and Children. • Recommendation 8: Development and publication of data to identify existing gaps and measures. • Recommendation 9: Establishment of state-based Commissioners and peak bodies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. <p>More information can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A
Family Matters Annual Report 2019	
Year	2019
Key focus	The 2019 Family Matters Report highlights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to enter statutory child protection systems at a greater rate, are more likely substantiated, are admitted to orders at higher rates, stay longer and exit via reunification or restoration far less frequently.
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	<p>The Report makes eight recommendations grouped by the Family Matters Building Blocks and focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching recommendation: Development of a national comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Strategy. • Building Block 1: Makes two recommendations to establish a target and strategy to increase investment in universal and targeted early intervention and prevention services and increase access to preventative early years services in Early Childhood Education and Care. • Building Block 2: Makes one recommendation to prioritise investment in service delivery by community-controlled organisations. • Building Block 3: Makes two recommendations to end legal orders and permanent care and adoption for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle into legislation, policy and practice. • Building Block 4: Makes two recommendations to establish and resource roles and bodies that enable participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in policy and service design and development of publicly available data in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. <p>More information can be found here.</p>
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Family Matters Annual Report 2020	
Family Matters	2020
Year	The 2020 Family Matters Report addresses concerning trends in some jurisdictions towards permanent care and adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the challenges experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Key focus	The 2020 Report makes 12 recommendations grouped by the Family Matters Building Blocks and focussed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching recommendation: Development of a national comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Strategy (recommendation 1). • Building Block 1: Makes two recommendations to increase investment in universal and targeted early intervention and prevention and increase the coverage and capacity of community-controlled integrated early years services. • Building Block 2: Makes three recommendations to increase investment in service delivery by community-controlled organisations, support family-led decision-making and expand delegated authority. • Building Block 3: Makes two recommendations to end legal orders and permanent care and adoption for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle into legislation, policy and practice. • Building Block 4: Makes four recommendations to establish accountability mechanisms such as partnerships, data improvement, commissioners and resourcing of peaks and bodies. More information can be found here .
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Family Matters Annual Report 2021	
Family Matters	2021
Year	The 2021 Family Matters Report puts a spotlight on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that support children to be strong and healthy in their early years. The Report highlights the release of <i>Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 – 2031</i> .
Key focus	The 2021 Report makes 11 recommendations grouped by the Family Matters Building Blocks and focussed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching recommendation: Ensure that the first five-year action plans for Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 – 2031 set out a clear and resourced pathway to transform Australia's child and family service systems to reduce over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. • Building Block 1: Makes two recommendations to increase investment in universal and targeted early intervention and prevention and increase the coverage and capacity of community-controlled integrated early years services. • Building Block 2: Makes three recommendations to set and implement investment targets, support family-led decision making and expand delegated authority. • Building Block 3: Makes two recommendations to end legal orders and permanent care and adoption for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle into legislation policy and practice. • Building Block 4: Makes four recommendations to establish accountability mechanisms such as partnerships, data improvement, commissioners and resourcing of peaks and bodies. More information can be found here .
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Family Matters Annual Report 2022	
Family Matters	2022
Year	The 2022 Family Matters Report addresses the issues driving removal of children and acknowledges that these drivers cut across the social and political determinants of health and wellbeing.
Key focus	The 2022 Report makes 15 recommendations grouped by the Family Matters Building Blocks and focussed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Block 1: Makes three recommendations to increase availability of universal and targeted prevention and early intervention, establish a dedicated funding model and develop and resource a joint state and Commonwealth-funded national program for community-controlled organisation-led integrated family support services. • Building Block 2: Makes four recommendations to set targets for proportional funding, support family-led decision making, develop community-based, youth-led models for participation of children and young people in matters that affect them and expand delegated authority. • Building Block 3: Makes four recommendations to end adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from OOHC, introduce legislative requirements for community-controlled organisations to approve permanent care orders for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and establish ongoing initiatives to improve practice. • Building Block 4: Makes four recommendations to establish accountability mechanisms such as partnerships, data improvement, commissioners and resourcing of peaks and bodies. More information can be found here .
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A

Family Matters Annual Report 2023	
Family Matters	2023
Year	The 2023 Family Matters Report highlights that the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering out-of-home care is continuing to rise, exposing them to ongoing harm and trauma.
Key focus	The Report makes 16 recommendations grouped by the Family Matters Building Blocks and focusses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Block 1: Makes two recommendations to increase availability of universal and targeted early intervention and prevention, establish a dedicated funding model and program for community-controlled organisations and develop and resource a joint state and Commonwealth funded national program for community-controlled led integrated family support services. • Building Block 2: Makes four recommendations to set targets for proportional funding, support family-led decision making, develop community-based, youth-led models for participation of children and young people in matters that affect them and expand delegated authority. • Building Block 3: Makes five recommendations to end adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from OOHC, introduce legislative requirements for community-controlled organisations to approve permanent care orders for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, increase investment in reunification services, embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and establish ongoing initiatives to improve practice. • Building Block 4: Makes four recommendations to establish accountability mechanisms such as partnerships, data improvement, commissioners and resourcing of peaks and bodies. More information can be found here .
Recommendations relevant to Child Safety and work, tasks goals or actions pursuant to report	
Caveats and limitations	N/A

D. Inquiries and Commissions since 2010 – SENIORS, DISABILITY AND CARERS RESPONSE

Work, tasks, goals or actions allocated to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety) pursuant to findings or recommendations made by any previous inquiry or commission since 2010 that directly relates to the matters described in paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

Please note: Inquiries and commissions included in following table include where there is broad relevance to people with disability, seniors or carers, not necessarily specifically to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, given the intersectional issues impacting these cohorts. Specific actions allocated to the department have not been identified within the timeframe but will be provided at a later date.

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2024	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme: Annual Report No. 1 of the 47th Parliament	Executive summary – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	Annual report outlining the implementation, performance, governance, administration and expenditure of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).	The report made a number of findings in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, including that they received significant evidence of the difficulties faced by this cohort in accessing the NDIS and community health services, especially outside major cities.
2024	Community Support and Services Committee: Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation' final report	Report No. 44, 57th Parliament - Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland	The Inquiry was established in response to the Queensland Public Advocate's 2023 report: 'Safe, secure and affordable?'. The need for an inquiry into supported accommodation in Queensland'. Broadly, the Committee recommends the Queensland Government undertake a review of the <i>Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002</i> to improve safeguards for residents, better support residential service providers to achieve compliance, and strengthen the accreditation process to better reflect best practice and combat a downside into institutionalisation.	The Committee noted that there are limited choices available for people and their families with regard to residential services in rural and regional Queensland, and there may be no residential services anywhere in Queensland that cater for specific cohorts such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2024	Inquiry into the recognition of unpaid carers: Recognising, valuing and supporting unpaid carers	Recognising, valuing and supporting unpaid carers (aph.gov.au)	The Committee examined the effectiveness of the <i>Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth)</i> in recognising and raising awareness of the role of carers, developments in the policy landscape since the Act was established and considered options for legislative amendment. The report made 22 recommendations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seeking legal advice to determine how best to establish rights for carers creating stronger obligations on public service agencies to reflect the principles of the Act improving carers' access to the supports they need, such as respite options and counselling, through Carer Gateway 	The inquiry found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers experience a lack of understanding and responsiveness from services, as well as discrimination and difficulty accessing help when they need it. Amendments need to be made to both the definition and support for carers in diverse and specific cohorts. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the meaning of carer is not necessarily a single person and should recognise the kinship structure. Similarly, not recognising the term 'carer' or identifying as a carer can be a barrier to seeking support. The Inquiry also noted that where support is available to carers, it needs to be culturally and linguistically appropriate.



		First Nations Intersection	
Year	Title	Link	Overview
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prioritising carers' health and wellbeing, and providing targeted support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse carers, through the new National Carer Strategy addressing the financial disadvantages carers experience over their lifetime, including supporting flexible work arrangements, introducing an income tax credit for carers returning to the paid workforce and consideration of other options to incentivise and recognise the impact of caring through the income tax and superannuation systems implementing a community education campaign to promote recognition and awareness of carers' rights and the diversity of carers, to address gender stereotypes and reduce stigma, and to drive positive workplace cultures ensuring there is more comprehensive data to inform policy and to track outcomes requiring a review of the operation and effectiveness of the Act and the National Carer Strategy every five years.
2023	Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability: Final Report	https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report	<p>The report includes a number of recommendations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. For example, the Report recommends reviewing strategies to ensure cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in criminal justice settings, addressing unmet potential of the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability policy, growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability workforce, and ensuring culturally safe and responsive services.</p>
2023	Report - Public hearing 33 - Violence, abuse, neglect and deprivation of human rights: Kaleb and Jonathon (a case study)	https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/report-public-hearing-33-violence-abuse-neglect-and-deprivation-human-rights-kaleb-and-jonathon-case-study	<p>Recommendations included Queensland providing staff, particularly those responsible for children, with training and resources that address how bias, and discrimination can occur when engaging with young people with disabilities who are at risk of violence, abuse, and neglect. Additionally, the State should urgently incorporate the experiences and voices of people with disabilities, especially children and young people, within the child protection system and that the State should review child protection laws.</p>
2023	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme: Capability and Culture of the NDIA	Terms of Reference – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	<p>The inquiry considered how the internal culture of the NDIA impacts the delivery of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, noting cultural competence and awareness are essential for equitable service provision.</p>



Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2023	Public Advocate handed the 'Safe, secure and affordable?' <i>The need for an inquiry into supported accommodation in Queensland</i>	Level 3 Residential services (parliament.qld.gov.au)	On 21 August 2023, the Public Advocate handed the 'Safe, secure and affordable?' <i>The need for an inquiry into supported accommodation in Queensland</i> report to the Queensland Government. The Public Advocate's report finds that level 3 residential services provide housing and support to some of the State's most marginalised and vulnerable citizens, a considerable proportion of whom have a cognitive disability or face other challenges that result in significant social care needs, and the needs of these cohorts are not being met by other residential support schemes.	The inquiry noted that examples of informal safeguards include supporting people from specific cultural groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to build their understanding and knowledge of disability-specific supports and services.
2023	Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme	Working together to deliver the NDIS NDIS Review	NDIS Review final report makes 26 recommendations with 139 supporting actions to improve the NDIS within the broader disability ecosystem.	The report includes a number of recommendations and actions directed towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including, for example, developing a national strategy to improve quality of the disability ecosystem for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, improving access to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants across Australia and for all participants in remote communities through alternative commissioning arrangements, and developing a dedicated First Nations Schedule under the new Disability Intergovernmental Agreement.
2023	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2022-2023	Domestic-and-family-violence-death-review-and-advisory-board-annual-report-2022-23.pdf (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	The report focuses on the ongoing reforms in Queensland's response to domestic and family violence, monitoring the implementation of recommendations, and identifying systemic issues, with an emphasis on enhancing service delivery, improving responses to sexual violence, and ensuring the voices of victims remain central to reform efforts.	The report highlights the overrepresentation of these communities in domestic and family violence fatalities and stresses the need for tailored, culturally informed responses to effectively address the systemic issues contributing to this. The Board recommends ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities and the integration of culturally safe practices in all areas of domestic and family violence prevention and response.
2022	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS Workforce	NDIS Workforce - Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry examined workforce challenges within the NDIS, including labour shortages, workforce conditions, and strategies for improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities within the NDIS framework.	Workforce training programs should include components on cultural competency to better serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
2022	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - Current Scheme - Implementation and Forecasting for the NDIS	Terms of Reference - Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	This inquiry focused on the implementation and forecasting aspects of the NDIS, examining current progress and predicting future needs and challenges in the scheme's rollout.	Consideration of how these implementation strategies impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants is necessary, especially in addressing unique barriers faced by these communities.
2022	Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.	Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide - Interim Report	The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was established on 8 July 2021 to examine systemic and institutional factors impacting Defence and veteran suicide. The inquiry uses personal stories, experiences and perspectives from serving and ex-serving Australian	ADF key objectives, strategies and mechanisms for improving diversity and inclusion in the ADF include improving the socioeconomic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Reconciliation Action Plans (include the dedicated Indigenous Employment Pathways).

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
			<p>Defence Force (ADF) members and their families, friends and support networks.</p> <p>An Interim Report, released on 11 August 2022, made 13 recommendations for the Australian Government. Issues that emerged include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues with ADF service, pre-service and post-service • concerns related to the risks and protective factors faced by serving and ex-serving ADF members and their families, particularly regarding engagement with Department of Veteran Affairs, the Department of Defence and ADF support services • stigma of mental health • the need for improved duty of care • recording and reporting of injury and illness. <p>The Royal Commission's final report is due by Monday 9 September 2024.</p>	<p>The commission notes ADF and Australian Human Rights Commission collaboration and the Australian Human Rights Commission role in measuring and evaluating the ADF's progress in cultural reform.</p>
2022	<p><i>Adult Safeguarding in Queensland, Volume 1: Identifying the Gaps</i></p> <p><i>Adult Safeguarding in Queensland, Volume 2: Reform Recommendations</i></p>	<p>Adult Safeguarding in Queensland Office of Public Advocate (justice.qld.gov.au)</p> <p>https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/public-advocate/outreach/human-rights/adult-safeguarding-in-queensland2</p>	<p>The Adult Safeguarding Report was released in two volumes. On 11 August 2022, <i>Adult Safeguarding in Queensland, Volume 1: Identifying the Gaps</i> was published and describes adult safeguarding themes including prevalence of elder abuse; emergency and disaster management; use and misuse of restrictive practices; poor information sharing and investigations; NDIS service provision; insufficient safe, affordable and accessible housing; and transition to the community.</p> <p>On 8 December 2022, the <i>Adult Safeguarding in Queensland, Volume 2: Reform Recommendations</i> was tabled in the Queensland Parliament and proposes 17 recommendations to Queensland Government, relating primarily to the establishment of an adult safeguarding agency to receive and investigate reports of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation of at-risk adults.</p>	<p>The report included a recommendation that Queensland Government facilitate the establishment of local Adult Safeguarding Networks throughout Queensland, and that such Networks could be established in relation to specific cohorts, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p>
2022	<p><i>Building Belonging: Review of Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act 1991</i></p>	<p>Building Belonging: Final report and recommendations from the Queensland Human Rights Commission Review of the Anti-Discrimination Act (qhrc.qld.gov.au)</p>	<p>Queensland's Attorney-General asked the Queensland Human Rights Commission to undertake a review of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) to re-evaluate all aspects of Queensland's discrimination law. The Review recommended five key reforms relating to eliminating discrimination (including introducing a new Act), refining key concepts, shifting the focus to prevention, improving the complaints system, and increasing protection.</p>	<p>The review made findings and recommendations in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including that Queensland Government should ensure genuine consultation in relation to affirmative measures approaches and ensure that there is adequate resourcing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services.</p>
2022	<p>Queensland Audit Office - Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence</p>	<p>Keeping people safe from domestic and family violence (Report 5: 2022-23) (cao.qld.gov.au)</p>	<p>This audit examined how effectively state public sector entities keep people safe from domestic and family violence (DFV), prevent it from occurring, and rehabilitate perpetrators to minimise re-offending. It also assessed how they coordinate with non-government DFV services.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government has committed to developing and trialling perpetrator programs specifically tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; developing a perpetrator-centric risk assessment approach and tool; and establishing a new court-based perpetrator diversion scheme.</p>



Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
	Violence (Report 5: 2022-23)		<p>The audit found that there are some early signs of progress whereby police are doing more referrals to DFV services, acting more on breaches of orders and using new laws relating to strangulation offences.</p> <p>However, significant gaps still existed in coordination between response entities and DFV service providers, public sector entities have not developed nor invested in adequate or sufficient rehabilitation programs, public sector entities are failing to proactively address the intergenerational transmission of violence (providing few support services for children and adolescents exposed to violence) and entities also need to review and improve the performance of those responses that are coordinated across entities.</p>	<p>The report notes that the department funds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services (FWS). FWS make it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in communities across Queensland to access culturally responsive support to improve their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children</p> <p>The Queensland Family and Child Commission suggests that future work by the Audit Office could explore the effectiveness of responses to DFV for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and make recommendations to strengthen support for these communities.</p>
2022	Queensland Government Response to the report of the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, Hear Her Voice – Report two Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system	Queensland Government response to Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system (publications.qld.gov.au)	<p>From the 188 recommendations made by the Taskforce under <i>Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system (Report Two)</i>, the Queensland Government supported 103 recommendations, support in principle 71 recommendations, and has noted 14 recommendations which require further consideration.</p> <p>The response to Report Two requires a different approach as it looks at sexual violence and women and girls' experience in the criminal justice system as victims, accused and offenders, and requires working together with a range of different stakeholders.</p> <p>Implementation will be led by multiple agencies to target effective prevention and early intervention to address the risk factors that can lead women and girls to offend. The Queensland Government will focus efforts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progressing systemic and legislative reform • placing victim-survivors at the centre • working with First Nations communities • reshaping community attitudes about sexual consent and sexual violence • meeting demand for sexual violence support services across the state • appropriate court management and sentencing for women and girls as accused • delivering justice • rehabilitating women in prison and girls in detention • measuring governance, monitoring and evaluation of reform. 	<p>The Queensland Government will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to co-design a specific whole-of-government and community strategy to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland's criminal justice system and meet Queensland's Closing the Gap justice targets.</p>



Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2022	Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Hear Her Voice -- Report Two	Publications Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (womenssafetyandjusticetaskforce.qld.gov.au)	<p>The Taskforce released <i>Hear her voice – Report Two – Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system</i> on 1 July 2022. Report Two focuses on the systemic change required to improve the experiences of women and girls in the criminal justice system as victim-survivors and as accused persons and offenders.</p> <p>Recommendations of Report Two have been informed by extensive consultation with key stakeholders across Queensland, including the judiciary, police, corrective services, the legal profession, policy makers, academics and service providers. The report makes 188 recommendations with a critical focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> educating the community about the fundamental importance of respectful relationships increasing specialist support and systemic advocacy for victim-survivors of sexual violence improving the responses of police, health workers, prosecutors and courts to victim-survivors of sexual violence extensive law reform relating to sexual offences, including changes to the laws of evidence, consent laws and court procedures to minimise trauma for victim-survivors of sexual violence addressing the underlying drivers of women and girls' contact with the criminal justice system supporting the diversion of women and girls away from the criminal justice system ensuring the human rights of women and girls are adequately protected when they are detained in watchhouses and prisons individual assistance for rehabilitation to address women's needs and reduce reoffending, and the number of women in prison and girls in detention. <p>To bring about change and eradicate violence against women and girls, the Taskforce states that support needs to be provided to rehabilitate and recover. This includes an acknowledgment that many women within the criminal justice system have been victims of domestic, family and sexual violence and deserve an opportunity to heal.</p>	<p>The report acknowledges the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls in the criminal justice system and notes the lack of cultural capability across the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Recommendations are focused on operational policies and practices, programs and services to be gender-centric, culturally safe and trauma informed in order to be accessible to diverse cohorts (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women with disability, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people).</p>
2022	Queensland Government response to the report of the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, Hear Her Voice -- Report One	Queensland Government response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Hear Her Voice - Report One Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland (publications.qld.gov.au)	<p>The Queensland Government supports or supports in principle all of the Taskforce's recommendations. The response builds on the reform work to date following the <i>Not Now, Not Ever Report</i> and Queensland's current ten-year DFV Prevention Strategy and will continue to deliver reforms including the development of the final <i>Fourth Action Plan 2022-23 to 2026-26</i> under the DFV Prevention Strategy; supporting implementation of recommendations of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board and the next <i>National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032</i>.</p>	<p>The Queensland Government will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to co-design a specific whole-of-government and community strategy to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland's criminal justice system and meet Queensland's Closing the Gap justice targets.</p>



		First Nations Intersection	
Year	Title	Link	Overview
			<p>Queensland Government will implement the actions and initiatives over the medium to long term, with initial work progressing from 2022-23. \$363 million over 5 years and \$61.3 million per annum ongoing was committed by the Queensland Government to implement reforms as part of the response including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new laws and programs to recognise prevent and punish coercive control (such as making coercive control a criminal offence) a Commission of Inquiry to examine police responses to domestic and family violence a whole-of-government strategy for culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who interact with the criminal justice system.
2022	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2021-2022	https://www.dcs.qld.gov.au/inquiry-into-domestic-and-family-violence-death-reviews/annual-reports-2021-2022	<p>The report emphasizes the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in domestic and family violence deaths. It recommends strengthening the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in High-Risk Teams and improving the integration of culturally informed practices in service delivery to better support Indigenous victims and their families.</p>
2021	Caring for Older Australians Productivity Commission Inquiry Report No. 53	https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiry-into-caring-for-older-australians/productivity-commission-inquiry-report-no-53	<p>The inquiry found there is limited capacity within Indigenous and remote communities to provide aged care services.</p> <p>The inquiry recommended the Australian Government ensure the accreditation standards for residential and community care are sufficient and robust to deliver services to a range of cohorts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care services are actively supported.</p>
2021	Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Final Report	https://www.rcjac.gov.au/royal-commission-into-aged-care-quality-and-safety-final-report	<p>The report made a range of findings and recommendations in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including, for example, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not access aged care at a rate commensurate with their level of need and often do not have access to culturally safe care.</p> <p>Recommendations relate to ensuring the aged care system makes specific and adequate provision for the diverse and changing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including through, for example, culturally safe, trauma-informed care, prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations as aged care providers, and establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Commissioner.</p>
2021	Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce	https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/	<p>The report emphasises the need to focus on primary prevention and early intervention measures, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>The report recommends that a strategy needs to be urgently developed to meet the closing the gap justice targets which includes reducing the</p>

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
	Hear Her Voice – Report 1		<p>report which examines coercive control and the need for a specific offence of 'commit domestic violence'.</p> <p>The report made 89 recommendations to the Queensland Government about essential reforms to the domestic violence service and justice systems, as well as a four-phase plan that includes a comprehensive suite of legislative reform. There is special emphasis on the education of police, lawyers, judicial officers, service providers, children and young people, the aged, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse peoples.</p> <p>A significant recommendation includes for the creation of a new offence to criminalise coercive control, although it is not to be implemented straight away as system-wide reform is necessary before a new offence comes into effect.</p>	<p>representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as offenders in the criminal justice system. It acknowledges that there is a lack of cultural capability across the system to respond to DFV involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including a failure to understand the cultural and historical barriers they face to reporting and cooperating with police.</p> <p>The report argues that it is critical that education on coercive control in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is community led and delivered.</p> <p>The Taskforce received submissions opposing the criminalisation of coercive control. The responses often referred to the unintended consequences, particularly the detrimental impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system.</p>
2021	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	Terms of Reference – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	<p>This inquiry assessed the effectiveness of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission in ensuring the safety and quality of services provided to participants. It also examined the Commission's ability to enforce compliance and address systemic issues.</p>	<p>The safeguarding measures must account for the cultural safety and specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, who may face unique vulnerabilities.</p>
2021	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - General Issues around the Implementation and Performance of the NDIS	General Issues 2021 (aph.gov.au)	<p>The report focused on systemic issues in the implementation and performance of the NDIS, identifying key areas that require reform or improvement to better serve participants.</p>	<p>It is important that these reforms address the historical and ongoing disadvantages faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in accessing NDIS services.</p>
2021	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - Independent Assessments	Terms of Reference – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	<p>This inquiry evaluated the impact of independent assessments on NDIS participants, particularly concerning how these assessments affect the determination of participant plans and funding allocations.</p>	<p>The process of independent assessments must be adapted to consider the cultural context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, ensuring fair and just outcomes. The Queensland Government submission to the inquiry emphasised the importance of ensuring the cultural competence of independent assessors and the cultural validity of assessment tools, and the need for specific pre-access support to address potential language and cultural barriers to NDIS access by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>
2021	Queensland Productivity Commission Inquiry - The NDIS Market in Queensland	NDIS-final-report-volume-1.pdf (treasury.qld.gov.au)	<p>The inquiry highlights the NDIS's positive impact on participants' lives but identifies areas needing improvement, such as the complexity of the regulatory framework, access barriers for eligible individuals, and market inefficiencies. The report recommends targeted reforms to enhance the scheme's effectiveness, participant outcomes, and overall market efficiency.</p>	<p>Considerations should include how the regulatory framework and market reforms affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, particularly in rural and remote communities where access barriers may be more pronounced.</p>

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2021	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2020-2021	Government's response to the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board 2020-21 Annual Report (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	The 2020-2021 Annual Report by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board underscores the persistent systemic issues and gaps in Queensland's response to domestic and family violence, emphasizing the need for improved service collaboration, better identification of risk factors, and sustained reforms to prevent future deaths in the context of domestic and family violence.	The report emphasizes the significant overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in domestic and family violence homicides. The report highlights the need for culturally appropriate services and interventions tailored to the specific needs of these communities. It recommends improving the recognition and response to domestic and family violence among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, particularly in remote areas, to address systemic gaps and enhance the effectiveness of prevention efforts.
2020	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – NDIS Planning	NDIS Planning Final Report (aph.gov.au)	This inquiry examined the planning processes within the NDIS, focusing on the challenges and effectiveness of planning procedures in meeting participant needs and ensuring fair outcomes.	Planning processes should be inclusive of the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, incorporating cultural considerations into personalised plans.
2020	Queensland Audit Office - Family Support and Child Protection System	Family support and child protection system (Report 1, 2020-21) (ao.qld.gov.au)	The audit assessed how effectively Queensland public sector work together for the safety and wellbeing of Queensland children. Six public sector entities responsible for delivering family support and child protection services were audited to determine whether Queensland's family support and child protection system is managed to ensure efficient and effective coordination across agencies, and if Queensland government agencies share responsibility for the continuous improvement of the family support and child protection system. The audit found that following the various reviews and recommendations, the Queensland government entities with prime responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of Queensland children have improved how effectively they manage the system and work together. Entities have made good progress implementing recommendations from the Carmody Inquiry, and other reviews and evaluations. There have also been some significant system and process improvements. However, it was found that the reforms have not achieved all the expected outcomes. The number of child harm reports continues to increase, staff struggle to find appropriate placement for children in need of care, and a high proportion of families do not receive the support services they need. Consequently, Queensland's family support and child protection system remains under considerable pressure and the entities need to do more to ensure they and non-government entities work effectively together.	The report highlights that the high percentage of children with a disability who are in care and the over-representation of Indigenous children in the system are indicators of specific challenges on the system. It is noted that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle's preferred option is to place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with kin or the child's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Its least preferred option is to place them with non-Indigenous carers, recognising the importance of community and kinship. It is suggested that the interdepartmental Committee, by assuming a stronger role in leadership and governance, is ideally positioned to lead cross-agency efforts in addressing systemic issues such as the over-representation of Indigenous children
2020	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Supported Independent Living	Report into Supported Independent Living (aph.gov.au)	The report explored issues related to Supported Independent Living (SIL) arrangements under the NDIS, addressing challenges in availability, access, and the adequacy of SIL options for participants.	Supported Independent Living options should be culturally appropriate and accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, recognising the importance of community and kinship ties.
2020	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review	Government's response to the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board 2019-20	The 2019-2020 Annual Report by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board examines the impact of systemic failures, the role of trauma, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on domestic and	The report highlights the ongoing overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in domestic and family violence incidents and related fatalities. The report emphasizes the urgent need for culturally informed and community-led responses to effectively address these issues.

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
	Advisory Board Annual Reports 2019-2020	Annual Report (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	family violence in Queensland, highlighting the need for improved responses to victims and systemic reforms to prevent future violence and deaths.	It also recommends enhancing support services tailored specifically to the cultural contexts and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to better prevent and respond to family violence.
2019	Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013-Tune Review	NDIS Act Review - final - with accessibility and prepared for publishing1 (dss.gov.au)	The review identifies areas for legislative improvement to enhance the participant experience, particularly through the introduction of a Participant Service Guarantee. It makes 29 recommendations to improve the participant experience, including new standards and processes to support the delivery of the Participant Service Guarantee.	The review addresses the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in accessing NDIS services. Ensuring that the proposed Participant Service Guarantee is culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is crucial.
2019	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2018-2019	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Report 2018-19 (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	The 2018-2019 Annual Report by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board highlights the patterns, risk factors, and systemic shortcomings leading to domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland, with a focus on vulnerable populations and the need for targeted reforms in service responses and preventive measures to reduce these fatalities.	The report emphasizes the need for culturally safe interventions and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, particularly in addressing intergenerational trauma and the high rates of youth suicide connected to domestic and family violence. The report recommends the development of specialised models and culturally appropriate mental health services to support these communities, recognising the critical importance of understanding and integrating cultural considerations into service delivery to prevent further tragedies.
2019	The Forensic Disability Service report (Queensland Ombudsman)	https://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/improve-public-administration/investigative-reports-and-casebooks/investigative-reports/the-forensic-disability-service-report	An investigation into the detention of people at the Forensic Disability Service (FDS) (Queensland).	The report identifies the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples among those detained at the FDS; identifies issues relating to dislocation from country and access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal Service for representation; and recommended that a review of culturally appropriate care at the FDS be undertaken.
2018	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2017-2018	Domestic and family violence death review and advisory board annual report-2017-18.pdf (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	The 2017-2018 Annual Report by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board details the systemic failures and risk factors contributing to domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland, with a focus on improving intervention, response consistency, and cultural competence across services to prevent future fatalities.	The report highlights the disproportionate impact of domestic and family violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The report calls for the development of a distinct, culturally appropriate strategy to address these challenges, emphasizing the need for tailored services and interventions that respect cultural contexts.
2018	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - NDIS ICT Systems	NDIS ICT Systems - Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry reviewed the information and communication technology systems used by the NDIS, focusing on their efficiency, reliability, and user-friendliness for both participants and providers.	The digital divide that disproportionately affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should be considered in the development and implementation of NDIS ICT systems.
2018	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme - Provision of Assistive Technology under the NDIS	Assistive Technology - Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry examined the provision of assistive technology under the NDIS, addressing issues related to accessibility, approval processes, and the timeliness of delivering necessary equipment to participants.	Assistive technology solutions must be made accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, with considerations for remote and rural community needs.

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2018	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Market Readiness for Provision of Services under the NDIS	Market Readiness – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry explored the readiness of the market to provide services under the NDIS, focusing on the availability and sustainability of service providers across different regions.	Ensuring market readiness includes fostering service providers who understand and respect the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
2018	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Provision of Hearing Services under the NDIS	The provision of hearing services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The report investigated the provision of hearing services under the NDIS, identifying gaps in service delivery and making recommendations for improving access to and the quality of hearing services.	Hearing services should be adapted to meet the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, who may have different health literacy levels and access barriers.
2018	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Transitional Arrangements for the NDIS	Transitional arrangements for the NDIS – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry focused on the transitional arrangements as the NDIS was rolled out across Australia, identifying challenges faced by participants and service providers during this period.	Transitional arrangements should specifically address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, ensuring continuity of care and culturally appropriate service delivery.
2017	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Advisory Board Annual Reports 2016-2017	Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board - Annual Report 2016-2017 (coronerscourt.qld.gov.au)	The 2016-2017 Annual Report by the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board highlights systemic issues and patterns leading to domestic and family violence deaths in Queensland, emphasizing the need for improved intervention, understanding of risk factors, and systemic reforms to prevent future fatalities.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are overrepresented in domestic and family homicides, highlighting the need for culturally informed and sustainably resourced responses to address the complex and intergenerational nature of family violence within these communities.
2017	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Provision of Services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach	Provision of services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	This inquiry examined the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) approach under the NDIS, focusing on the effectiveness of services provided to young children with developmental delays or disabilities.	Culturally appropriate services for ensuring equitable access and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
2017	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Provision of Services under the NDIS for People with Psychosocial Disabilities related to a Mental Health Condition	The provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	The inquiry explored the specific challenges faced by people with psychosocial disabilities in accessing NDIS services, with a focus on improving service delivery and support for this group.	Culturally appropriate support and services within the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with psychosocial disabilities. It highlights the importance of recognising the unique cultural context and ensuring that services are accessible, responsive, and tailored to the specific needs of these communities to improve their engagement and outcomes within the NDIS framework.

Year	Title	Link	Overview	First Nations Intersection
2016	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Accommodation for People with Disabilities and the NDIS	Report – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	This inquiry focused on the accommodation options available to NDIS participants, particularly the challenges in accessing affordable and suitable housing.	The importance of developing housing solutions within the NDIS that are culturally appropriate and accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities, ensuring their specific cultural needs are met and they have equitable access to suitable accommodation.
2015	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – Second progress report on the implementation and administration of the National Disability Insurance Scheme	Second progress report – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	It provides an update on the implementation and administration of the NDIS, focusing on the progress within various trial sites, participant planning processes, and issues faced by service providers.	The report highlights the need for culturally appropriate services and acknowledges the challenges faced by Indigenous communities in accessing NDIS services. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that Indigenous Australians with disabilities are supported in a manner that respects their cultural context and addresses the unique barriers they face in engaging with the NDIS effectively.
2014	Joint standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme – First progress report on the implementation and administration of the National Disability Insurance Scheme	First progress report – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)	It provides an overview of the early stages of the NDIS rollout, focusing on the initial trial sites. The report discusses the challenges and successes of the initial implementation, including participant engagement, service delivery, and the establishment of necessary infrastructure.	The report highlights challenges related to accessibility and the need for culturally appropriate services. It recommends working with Indigenous organisations to tailor the NDIS to better meet the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, ensuring their equitable participation in and benefit from the scheme.
2011	Productivity Commission – Disability care and support	Inquiry report - Disability Care and Support - Productivity Commission (pc.gov.au)	The inquiry proposed the establishment of the National Disability Insurance Scheme to provide comprehensive, insurance-based support for Australians with significant disabilities, ensuring high-quality, long-term care that is consistent, equitable, and adequately funded.	The inquiries highlight the need for culturally appropriate and accessible disability services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in remote areas. The recommendations include collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in service design and implementation, and targeted research to address their unique need.
2011	Productivity Commission – Caring for older Australians	Inquiry report - Caring for Older Australians - Productivity Commission (pc.gov.au)	The proposed reforms for Australia's aged care system focus on enhancing the quality, accessibility, and flexibility of care services to meet the growing demands of an aging population.	The reform must ensure that aged care services are culturally appropriate and accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors, who may have specific needs and preferences rooted in their cultural background.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND'S CHILD SAFETY SYSTEM

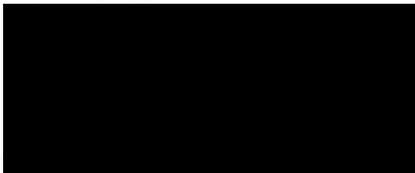
PROACTIVE STATEMENT OF VICTORIA VAN HOUDT

**A/CHIEF PRACTITIONER, DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, SENIORS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHILD SAFETY**

**Annexure 5 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability
action plan 2025-2027**

This and the preceding 16 pages is the annexure mentioned and referred to as

“Annexure 5” in the statement of Victoria Van Houdt dated 5 September 2025.



Victoria Van Houdt



Witness



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability action plan 2025-2027

Improving access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)



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Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the State of Queensland; we acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and sea.

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as two unique and diverse peoples with their own rich and distinct cultures.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present as well as the existing and emerging leaders who walk together in partnership on this journey.

The story of the artwork



We acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal artist and Gilingimba designer Jenna Lee. Jenna is a descendant of the Larrakia people in the Northern Territory.

The motif was created as a symbol and visual narrative of the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and communities' collective strategy, commitment, journey and vision to ensure First Nations peoples' cultural identity, diversity and richness are central to decisions made with regard to children, families and communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have gathered around fires as communities for over 60,000 years to pass down knowledge and share stories.

At the heart of the department's motif is a fire representing people coming together, gathering in warmth and safety. As more gather, the flames grow brighter and stronger, fuelled by the exchange of stories, knowledge and understanding, of each other and individually in self-determination.

Surrounding the fire is a dark layer of charcoal and smoke, acknowledging the trauma experienced by individuals, families and communities, as well as centuries of strength and resilience. The charcoal and smoke also represent both traditional and contemporary healing for communities and a symbol of the importance of the continuation of culture and cultural practice.

The final layer is the vibrant new growth, representing new beginnings for individuals, families and communities through safety, understanding, self-determination, resilience and healing.

Drawn from Yangga Dahgu-Mekem-Gen (Reframing the Relationship Roadmap)



Sincere thanks and co-design

Thank you to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and key sector partners for their participation in the consultations.

A special thanks to the department's First Nations Council (incorporating Youth Justice representatives), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability Internal Collective and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSCIPP) for ongoing cultural guidance and leadership.

This plan is about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and their families to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). It has been co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations (ATSICCOs), National and State peaks and government agencies.

Our commitment

The action plan reflects the commitment by the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the department) to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people with disability involved with the child protection system have access to the supports they require to address their disability needs. It does not reflect all the work occurring across Queensland Government to progress *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families* or other strategies and initiatives.

Where possible, the action plan and resources developed will be made available online and in easy read and accessible languages.



Introduction

The department's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child with disability action plan 2025-2027* is a priority for the Office of the Chief Practitioner to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability in contact with Queensland's child protection system will receive timely access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to support and improve their life outcomes.

The department's goal is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with developmental delay and disability in contact with child protection in Queensland to experience parity in NDIS referrals, access and plan data with non-Indigenous children.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability data

The Royal Commission into Violence Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability: Volume 9: First Nations People with Disability 2023 identified that there is a large proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with 'unknown or not stated disability', and that one in five of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia have a disability.

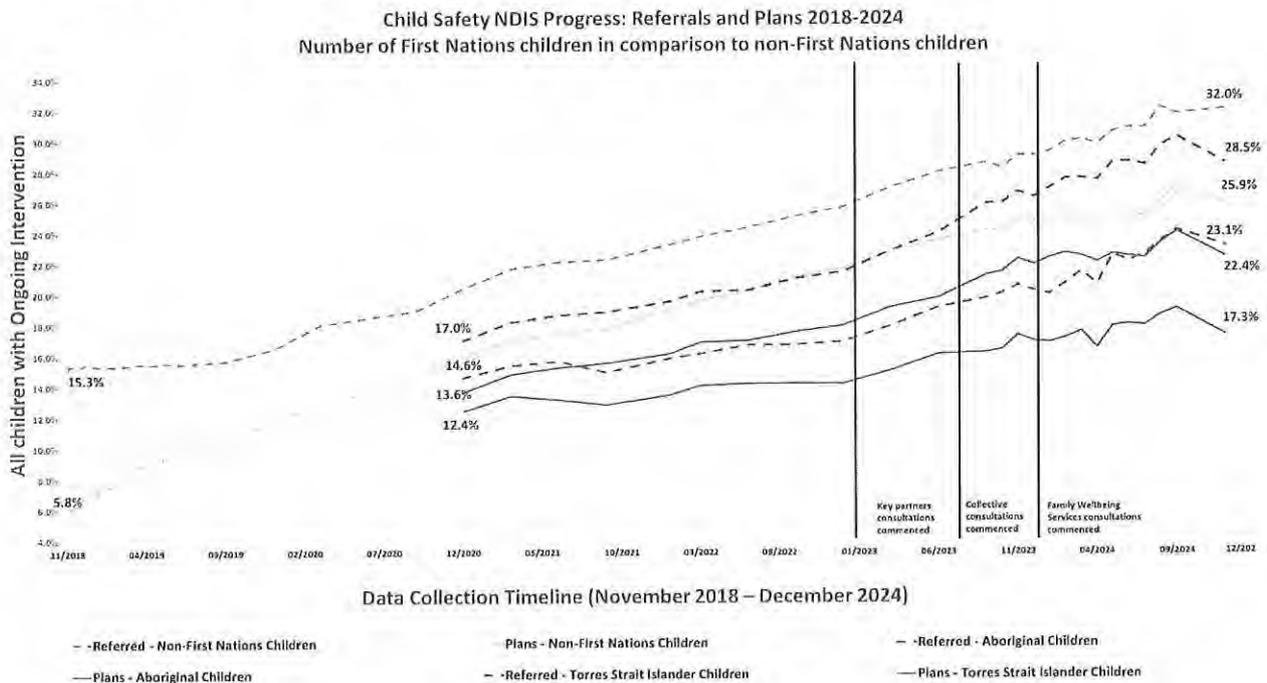
The *Family Matters* report highlighted that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 10.5 times more likely to be living in out of home care in Australia.

As at 31 December 2024, 22.4 percent of Aboriginal children and 17.3 of Torres Strait Islander children subject to ongoing child protection intervention had a diagnosed disability, compared to 25.9 percent of non-Indigenous children subject to ongoing intervention.

Of all 5-18 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who participated in the My Life in Care survey (2023), 30 per cent self-identified as having a disability.

The department's operational data demonstrates that the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability subject to child protection orders in Queensland being referred to, and accessing the NDIS is lower in comparison to non-Indigenous children. The graph below outlines the difference in referrals and NDIS plans and while it is pleasing to see the upward trend since the plan co-design consultations began in 2022, there is more to be done to achieve parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability.

Graph 1: Child Safety NDIS Progress: Referrals and Plan Trends 2018-2024



Co-design approach

The department acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families know their children and are the experts of their ways of knowing, being and doing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are resilient, and children and their families are stronger together as they thrive through connection to kin, culture, community, country, spirit, language, and dreamtime stories.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations (ATSICCOs) and staff emphasised the importance of deeply listening to children, families, communities, and staff to improve access to the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with developmental delay and disability in contact with the department.

Our co-design journey: What Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals and families with a child with a disability shared about their experiences access disability supports companion document captures the range of feedback from the extensive consultations.

Other considerations

This action plan will complement work across the department, including Reclaiming our storyline: Transforming systems and practice by making decisions in our way, *Yangaa Dahgu – Mekem Gen: Reframing the Relationship*, Residential Care Reform in Queensland; the *Our Way: a generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families (2017-2037)*.

Recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission and NDIS Review captured in the Queensland Government's Disability Reform Framework may influence or change some of the actions and timeframes in the plan.

Priority areas

The consultations identified three priority areas that would improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and their families in contact with child protection in Queensland to accessing the NDIS.

Making Active Efforts to target the three priorities will improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and/or developmental delay and their families through access to culturally appropriate NDIS supports. It is envisaged that support for a child's disability needs will further support and sustain kinship care, reunification and work towards reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in contact with child protection in Queensland.

Three priorities

1. **Early identification of a child's developmental delay and disability needs**
2. **Being a culturally responsive NDIS informed Child Safety workforce**
3. **Enhancing disability and NDIS interface with key sector partners**

Early identification of developmental delays and / or disability in children can greatly help children with better outcomes throughout their life course. Early diagnosis and use of support services and therapies has shown to positively impact a child's health, language and communication, cognitive development and social-emotional development. Additionally, early supports and interventions may increase the capability of families with children with a disability therefore reducing the risk of contact with child protection system.

Early diagnosis of developmental delay and / or disability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children could be improved. Delayed diagnosis can often be attributed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families not recognising behaviours as disability related or families may be reluctant to seek specialist intervention. Additionally, practitioners have misdiagnosed signs of developmental delay or disability as inter-generational trauma, further impacting an early diagnosis for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families may require support to recognise developmental delay, disability or related behaviours in their child, and encouragement to access professional advice and diagnosis and NDIS support for their child.

Actions	Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and systems	How to measure progress?	Lead	Timeframe	ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO:	CIG Priority Reform	Safe & Supported Action	Path to Treaty Domain
1. Update the Child Safety Disability Practice Kit with disability and developmental delay early indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Departmental staff will have access to early disability and developmental delay indicators specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disability Practice Kit will be updated with early indicators. 	Child Protection Practice (CPP), Specialist Practice	Q2 2025	3	8c	5	
2. Coordinate local relationships between NDIS Remote Community Connectors (RCC), Aboriginal Disability Liaison Officers (ADLO) and Child Safety staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ RCCs and ADLOs will have an increased understanding of the department to identify and support Aboriginal and Torres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait 	Specialist Practice, RCC, and ADLO	Ongoing	3	8c	5	

<p>to improve agency knowledge and roles in supporting NDIS access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</p>	<p>Strait Islander children with developmental delay or disability with access to the NDIS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase in referrals to RCCs and ADLOs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with suspected disability. 	<p>Islander children with NDIS access where RCC and ADLOs are located.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information shared with department staff outlining the RCC and ADLO roles. 	
<p>3. Develop and promote a resource for Family Wellbeing Services (FWS) to improve assessment and early identification of developmental delay and / or disability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FWS will have access to information to support their knowledge of developmental delay and disability. ➤ FWS will discuss and share information about pathways to disability assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with families. ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families will receive support early and prior to the family entering the tertiary system. 	<p>Culturally appropriate resource provided to FWS staff.</p>	<p>Q2 2025</p> <p>3</p> <p>8c</p> <p>5</p>
<p>4. Ensure access to specialist disability knowledge through Specialist Services Clinicians and explore opportunities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specialist Services Clinician positions across the State.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff will have access to specialist disability knowledge for assessment and referral processes through access to Specialist Services Clinicians who are culturally competent. 	<p>Investment and Commissioning (I&C), Specialist Practice, NDIA</p>	<p>Regions with Specialist Practice</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Specialist Service Clinician referral and consultation numbers. 		

3. Being a culturally responsive disability and NDIS informed Child Safety workforce

Having a disability and NDIS informed, and a culturally responsive workforce is our greatest asset in achieving improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with developmental delay and / or disability.

Practitioners with disability and NDIS knowledge can recognise and respond when a child has a developmental delay, disability or behaviours of concern and support access to the NDIS.

A culturally responsive workforce will collaborate with Elders, community and key partners and make active efforts to uphold the rights under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability and their families at the centre of practice.

The department recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices differ from Western society and are deeply rooted in culture, attachment, storytelling, connection to land, spirituality, and ceremony. *Reframing the Relationship* will create opportunities to have a culturally responsive workforce.

Experienced, committed, and open-minded staff are vital to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability in care receive NDIS supports.

Actions	What outcomes will these actions deliver for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and systems	How to measure progress?	Lead	Timeframe	ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO:		
					CtG Priority Reforms	Safe & Supported Action	Path to Treaty Domain
1. Update the current Child Safety disability and NDIS training modules to include cultural considerations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Departmental staff will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children with a disability with cultural sensitivity. ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and families will receive support to access professional advice and access to the NDIS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Departmental staff will report feeling confident in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families with a disability to gain access to the NDIS. 	Child Safety Training Unit, Specialist Practice	Q1 2025	3		5

2.	<p>Provide professional development opportunities for Cultural Practice Advisors (CPA) to increase their disability and NDIS knowledge through training and inclusion in the Child Safety staff NDIS Community of Practice (CoP).</p>	<p>Departmental training will have contemporary and culturally competent disability and NDIS information.</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with a disability involved with the child protection system will have increased rates of access to NDIS.</p>	<p>OCP and regions</p>	Ongoing				
3.	<p>Ensure all departmental disability and NDIS resources are contemporary and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural considerations.</p>	<p>Staff will have evidence-based resources to support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to recognise developmental delay and disability and to access the NDIS.</p>	<p>Resources will reflect contemporary disability and NDIS practice. Increased staff access to the relevant areas of the Intranet and Internet.</p>	<p>CPP, Specialist Practice</p>	Q4 2025	3	8c	5	
4.	<p>Develop practice guidance for staff to prioritise disability assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</p>	<p>Aligned to Youth Justice Neurodisability Framework Aboriginal and Torres Strait</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people on</p>	<p>Specialist Practice, CPP, Youth</p>	Ongoing	3	8c	5	

<p>young people with suspected disability on Child Safety and Youth Justice (YJ) dual orders.</p>	<p>Islander young people on dual orders will have received a disability assessment if disability suspected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff will have practice guidance to prioritise disability assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people on dual Child Safety and YJ orders. ➤ Departmental and YJ staff partner to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people on dual orders and the serious repeat offender index (SROI) to receive a disability assessment. 	<p>dual orders with a suspected disability will receive a disability assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practice guidance will be available to departmental and YJ staff to identify and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young to access a disability assessment. 	<p>Justice and Detention Centre SCSO</p>	<p>Q3 2025</p>			
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3. Enhancing our disability and NDIS interface with key sector partners

Having disability and NDIS informed, and culturally competent funded services across the child protection continuum will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability who come into contact with child protection in Queensland receive culturally responsive services to support their connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.

When Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children or young people with disability are unable to live with their family or kin, being cared for by a foster carer or a residential care provider may be needed. Having disability and NDIS informed and culturally competent carers and service providers may help a child to build their capacity to undertake daily living activities and increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability to return to their families, kin and communities.

Our key sector partners are across community, government and non-government sector. Our partners are families, Elders, carers, service providers, ATSICCOs, peak bodies, Queensland mainstream and community services and the NDIA.

Improved disability and NDIS interface with key sector partners will ensure culturally responsive support across disability and NDIS to reduce a family's contact with child protection.

Actions	What outcomes will these actions deliver for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and systems	How to measure progress?	Lead	Timeframe	ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO:		
					CTG Priority Reforms	Safe & Supported Action	Path to Treaty Domain
1. Providing disability and NDIS training with secondary services' staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families will be supported with access to the NDIS by secondary services. ➤ Secondary services staff will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with access to the NDIS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased numbers of secondary services staff completed NDIS training. 	I&C, Specialist Practice, NDIA	Ongoing	3	8c	5

2.	Develop resources for secondary services staff on the NDIS and Child Safety interface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents will understand their role across the NDIS pathway dependent on the agreement or child protection order in place. ➤ Secondary services are confident in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with a disability within the context of child safety involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Culturally appropriate disability and NDIS informed resources will be available for secondary services staff. ➤ Secondary services report increased knowledge of the NDIS. 	I&C, Specialist Practice, and the NDIA	Ongoing	3	8c	5
3.	Review FWS Program Model and Guidelines to ensure referral processes with secondary services includes information sharing of developmental delay, disability and NDIS supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved information sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's development delay, disability and NDIS needs between secondary services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FWS Model and Program Guidelines will reflect developmental delay, disability and NDIS information to be shared in secondary services referrals. 	I&C, OCP	TBC		8c	5
4.	Explore collaboration with Queensland Foster and Kinship Care (QFKC) and PeakCare to create culturally appropriate disability and NDIS learning opportunities for foster, kinship and residential carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carers will have access to culturally appropriate training and information to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to receive culturally appropriate NDIS support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care will receive culturally appropriate NDIS support. ➤ Carers report increased knowledge of the NDIS. ➤ Culturally appropriate learning materials available for carers. 	Specialist Practice, I&C, QFKC and PeakCare	TBC		8c	5

5.	<p>Establish a Community of Practice (CoP) with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key sector partners to develop shared understanding of the department and NDIS interface.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key sector partners will have access to information to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to receive culturally appropriate NDIS supports. ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key sector partners will have opportunities for information sharing in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with NDIS supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department delivers regular CoPs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key sector partners to strengthen relationships with the NDIA and the department. 	<p>Specialist Practice, I&C, NDIA and QATSICPP</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>8c</p>	<p>5</p>
6.	<p>Undertake Coordinated Funding Proposals (CFP) in identified areas across regions, as required to ensure NDIS support is provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on Guardianship Orders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will have greater access to NDIS support in the identified areas across regions. ➤ Culturally appropriate funded NDIS supports will increase in targeted areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CFPs will be delivered in the identified areas across regions. 	<p>Specialist Practice, NDIA</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>8c</p>	<p>5</p>
7.	<p>Research NDIA's sector strengthening planning and place-based alternative commissioning arrangements to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in rural, remote, and very remote communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OCP will have increased understanding of the NDIA's sector strengthening planning and place-based alternative commissioning arrangements to improve practice guidance for staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practice advice on contemporary NDIS commissioning arrangements in rural, remote and very remote communities will be available to staff. 	<p>Specialist Practice, NDIA</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>8c</p>	<p>5</p>

Implementation and Review

The Office of the Chief Practitioner will lead delivery of actions in partnership with internal and external key sector partners and in consultation with the department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability Action Plan Collective and the First Nations Council.

Implementation of the plan will commence in 2025 with six monthly reporting by OCP and reviewed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability Action Plan Collective and the First Nations Council.

For more information

Please contact the NDIS Interface Team, Specialist Practice, Office of the Chief Practitioner by email at NDISSupport@cyjma.qld.gov.au

Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037 and *Breaking Cycles Action Plan 2023-25*