

# Annual Report

## 2010-2011





DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# Annual Report

## 2010-2011



**The Honourable Kon Vatskalis MLA**  
**Minister for Children and Families**  
**Minister for Child Protection**

**The Honourable Malarndirri McCarthy MLA**  
**Minister for Women's Policy**

**The Honourable Rob Knight MLA**  
**Minister for Young Territorians**

Dear Ministers

In accordance with the provisions of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, I am pleased to submit the 2010-2011 Annual Report on the activities and achievements of the Department of Children and Families.

The report describes activities and performance outcomes against the Department's budget plan commitments and highlights key achievements for the past year.

Pursuant to the *Financial Management Act*, the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, and the *Information Act*, I advise that to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (a) Proper records of all transactions affecting the Department are kept and the employees under my control observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, the Financial Management Regulations and the Treasurer's Directions.
- (b) Procedures within the Department afford proper internal control, and these procedures are recorded in the Department of Health's Accounting and Property Manual, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act*. The Department will be developing its own Accounting and Property Manual in the 2011-2012 financial year.
- (c) There is no indication of fraud, malpractice, major breach of legislation or delegation, major error in, or omission from, the accounts and records.
- (d) The internal audit capacity available to the Department is adequate and the results of internal audits have been reported to me.
- (e) The financial statements included in the Annual Report has been prepared from proper accounts and records and is in accordance with the Treasurer's Directions.
- (f) All Employment instructions issued by the Commissioner for Public Employment have been satisfied.
- (g) Procedures within the Department complied with the requirements of the *Information Act*.

Yours sincerely



**CLARE GARDINER-BARNES**

Chief Executive

7 / 7 / 2011

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# Message from the Chief Executive

It is with great pleasure that I present the first Annual Report for the new Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The Department came into existence on 1 January 2011 consisting of the former division of NT Families and Children from the former Department of Health and Families.

It is the first time in the Territory's history that there has been a government agency dedicated to promoting child protection and well being services.

It is important to note however, the responsibilities of DCF are much broader than just the care and protection of children. It also encompasses youth affairs, homelessness, the prevention of domestic and family violence, responding to the victims of sexual assault and women's policy.

This first Annual Report highlights the key achievements and activities of the former NT Families and Children and the new Department of Children and Families, and reflects our visions and values as the newest NT Government agency.

A significant focus of DCF has been putting into action the 147 recommendations handed down by the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory.

The Board of Inquiry report, *Growing them strong, together*, was the most extensive review of child protection services in the Northern Territory's history and called for sweeping systemic and cultural change.

Since the Board of Inquiry report was handed down in October 2010 there have been great strides taken to begin the process of transforming child protection and well being services.

In February, 2011 DCF released the *Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework* which clearly sets out how the NT Government is responding and putting into action the Board of Inquiry's 147 recommendations.

This was followed by the first *Child Protection Reform Progress Report* in April 2011 which showed the 34 urgent recommendations made by the Board of Inquiry had all commenced within the recommended six-month timeframe.

DCF has also released a new high-level organisational structure which reflects the move to more services being delivered at a regional level.

The new structure sees the creation of three new operational regions, Greater Darwin, Katherine and Northern and Central Australia, and three Regional Directors have commenced with DCF.

The new structure also firmly embeds the responsibility for implementing the Board of Inquiry's recommendations within the Department's core business areas.

I would like to thank all of the Department of Children and Families' staff, our non-government partners and other NT Government agencies for their efforts in helping to establish our new department, and for their commitment to improving services for Territory children, youth, individuals and families.

I look forward to the year ahead which presents many challenges but equally as many opportunities.

**Clare Gardiner-Barnes**

Chief Executive

Department of Children and Families

# About this report

This report outlines the Department's performance from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011. The reporting year covers activities undertaken when the former NT Families and Children was a division of the then Department of Health and Families, and subsequent establishment of the Department of Children and Families on 1 January 2011.

Following the establishment of the new Department, responsibilities were transferred and are able to be reported for the whole financial year.

As the Department is still proceeding through its establishment phase, a strategic plan is currently under development. Subsequent annual reports will be framed to track Departmental performance against strategic intent.

The 2010-2011 Annual Report focuses on highlights from the new Department, and reports against budget output commitments and mandated reports arising from the Board of Inquiry report *Growing them strong, together*. It also includes reports of human and financial resources and documents the governance and organisational structures that have been put in place.

Some of the new Department's systems remain shared with the Department of Health (formerly the Department of Health and Families), and where this is the case, shared systems are detailed.

Throughout this report, case studies have been included to highlight the Department's activities and demonstrate how programs, policies and services are providing support to Northern Territory children, youth, individuals, families and their communities.

## DCF Executive Leadership Group



**Clare Gardiner-Barnes**

Chief Executive

Clare joined the former NT Families and Children in January 2010 and has since been appointed as the Chief Executive of the Department of Children and Families. Under Clare's leadership, a strong

Executive Leadership Group has been established, demonstrating a range of skills and expertise to guide the new Department along a path of reform and improvements in all key business and program areas.



**Lorraine Williams**

Executive Director, Regional Services

Lorraine joined the Department in January 2011 from New Zealand and was responsible for frontline services at a regional level. Lorraine was also responsible for overseeing a range of Territory-wide services including,

Central Intake, Child Abuse Taskforce, Interstate Liaison and Remote Service Delivery.

# DCF Executive Leadership Group



**Julie Johnson**

Executive Director,  
Office of the Chief Executive  
Jullie joined the former NT Families and Children Division in July 2010 and took up the position of Executive Director, Office of the Chief Executive on 1 January 2011.

As well as providing executive support for the Chief Executive, the office includes the Correspondence and Ministerial Liaison, Media and Corporate Communications, Critical Incident and Practice Audits, Disaster Recovery and Internal Audit units.



**Bronwyn Thompson**

Director,  
Care and Protection Policy  
Bronwyn worked for the former NT Families and Children as the Director of the Care and Protection Policy Division and moved to the new Department of Children and

Families when it began operations on 1 January 2011. The Division included the Quality Unit, Care and Protection Learning and Development, Operational Policy and Strategic Projects.



**Helen Nezeritis**

Executive Director,  
Corporate Services  
Helen joined the Department in February 2011 and oversaw key areas integral to the establishment to the new Department of Children and Families including,

Shared Corporate Services arrangements with the NT Department of Health, Workforce and Organisational Learning which included staffing services and recruitment, Finance, NGO Service Development Unit and Facilities and Asset Management.



**Joanne Townsend**

Director, Youth Services  
Joanne was Director of the Youth Services Branch when it was part of the former Department of Health and Families. After becoming part of the new Department of Children and Families on 1 January 2011,

the Branch included the Office of Youth Affairs, Darwin Family Support Centre, Alice Springs Family Support Centre and the Youth Justice Support Unit.



**Fran O'Toole**

Director, Family and Individual Support Services

Fran was responsible for overseeing Family and Individual Support Services when it was within the NT Families and Children Division of the former Department

of Health and Families. The FISS Branch included the Child and Parenting Support Team, Domestic and Family Violence Policy Team, Sexual Assault Services, Office of Women's Policy, Remote Family Violence Team, Mobile Outreach Service Plus and Homelessness Unit.



**Fiona Lynch**

Executive Director,  
Strategic Policy and Performance  
Fiona joined the Department of Children and Families in January 2011 and was responsible for Strategic Policy and Legislation, Corporate Planning, Performance

& Reporting and Research & Evaluation Units.



**Pippa Rudd**

Senior Director, Strategic Reform and Accountability Team

Pippa was appointed as Senior Director, Strategic Reform and Accountability Team in November 2010 and was responsible for leading the team implementing reforms

arising from the recommendations made by the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory. The team was responsible for overseeing key reforms to the areas of legislation, partnerships, workforce, practice reform and regionalisation.

# Year in review

The major highlight for the 2010-11 year was the creation of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) which began operation on 1 January 2011.

The new Department consists of the former division of NT Families and Children which was part of the former Department of Health and Families.

The Northern Territory Government announced the creation of a stand alone agency to oversee child protection and well being services in response the Board of Inquiry's report *Growing them strong, together*.

The report was handed down in October 2010 and made 147 recommendations to reform child protection services.

A key focus of DCF this financial year has been responding to the recommendations through the *Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework*. The framework, released in February 2011, sets out the action that will be taken by Government, in partnership with the community, to build a new child protection and family support system over the next five years.

DCF also released a *Child Protection Reform Progress Report* in April 2011 which showed that work on all 34 urgent recommendations

had commenced within the timeframe recommended by the Board of Inquiry. DCF is committed to the provision of a professional and responsive child protection system to new and existing clients.

Another key achievement in the reporting period was the introduction of new Structured Decision Making (SDM) intake screening and response priority tools which were implemented on 1 July 2010. The introduction of the SDM represented one of the most significant changes to decision making processes in the Department's Central Intake in recent years. The intake tool helps child protection staff with decision making about whether a notification will be accepted for investigation (screening), and if so, how quickly the Department should respond (priority).

In January 2011, a report was completed recommending that the Central Intake Team (CIT) and the After Hours Crisis Service amalgamate to form a 24/7 child protection intake and after hours service.

Another key milestone was the hosting of the first ever Foster and Kinship Recognition program which recognised and acknowledged the outstanding efforts of foster and kinship carers. During May and June 2011, Carer Service Awards were presented to carers



# Year in review

reaching milestones for years of service, and in June 2011 the Minister for Children and Families, Kon Vatskalis MLA, presented the Carer Excellence Awards at the Darwin Convention Centre.

This year DCF celebrated 100 years of International Women's Day, held on 8 March. The Department held a range of activities to honour the day with the theme, *Celebrating Our Past, Planning For Our Future*. These activities included a Centenary of Territory Women exhibition, Centenary of International Women's Day art awards, a 2003-2010 Tribute to Northern Territory Women airport display, the flying of a specially commissioned Centenary of International Women's Day flag, participation in the International Women's Day march through the streets of Darwin, a Centenary of International Women's Day luncheon in Alice Springs and rollout of the 2011 International Women's Day grants program.

In April 2011, the Department launched the second phase of a social marketing campaign aimed at reducing domestic and family violence. The social marketing campaign *Stop the Hurting, Start the Healing*, focussed on encouraging men who use violence in their family relationships to change their behaviour.

In 2010 DCF's Domestic and Family Violence Hospitals Project also began. Social Workers and Aboriginal Domestic and Family Violence Workers started working in hospitals in Gove, Katherine, and Darwin to better connect with Territorians who have experienced family violence.

In November 2010, DCF funded and co-convened the 2010 NT Homelessness Summit in Darwin. The Summit, co-convened with NT Shelter and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services, was attended by 130 representatives from the NT specialist homelessness services sector, the non-government sector and all levels of government.

National Youth Week 2011 was the biggest and best ever in the Northern Territory with more than 200 registered events. Young people attended sporting, recreational, cultural and development activities held across the Territory in the first week of April.



# The year ahead

The Department of Children and Families has a number of key priorities for 2011-2012.

Following the release of a new organisational structure in August 2011, DCF is moving to increase the services being delivered in three newly created regions, Greater Darwin, Katherine and Northern and Central Australia.

The rollout of regionalisation will see increased decisions regarding service delivery made at a local level, which will result in better co-ordination between NT Government and non-government agencies. The regionalisation of services will also allow greater flexibility to provide relevant and culturally-appropriate services at a community level.

The new structure reflects the other important priorities of the Department, including remote service delivery and the consolidation of policy and program delivery. The new structure also firmly embeds the responsibility for implementing the Board of Inquiry recommendations within the business areas of the Department as part of the core business of each division.

DCF is establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy Unit in 2011-2012. The Unit will make sure there is adequate and appropriate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, youth, and families in the way services are developed and delivered. It will also ensure that departmental policies and procedures support the provision of culturally appropriate services and will develop a mentoring pathway as a mechanism to develop workforce skills and capacity across the Department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

A priority during 2011-2012 is the development of a new strategic agenda that reflects the gamut of policy and service delivery work carried out by DCF. The strategic agenda will incorporate the *Safe Children, Bright Futures*

*Strategic Framework*. DCF's strategic agenda will continue to address key reform elements that support the regional structure for service delivery, greater engagement and partnership with the community and non-government sector, as well as incorporating the views and vision of DCF staff.

In 2011-2012 the implementation of recommendations arising from the Board of Inquiry into Child Protection System in the Northern Territory will continue. In particular, work will continue or begin on recommendations rated as level two urgency, that is commencing within 18 months of the report being handed down.

Other important priorities being delivered in 2011-2012 in response to the Board of Inquiry's recommendations include:

- The introduction of four new Structured Decision Making (SDM) safety and risk assessment tools on 1 July 2011. The tools are Safety Assessment, Family Risk Assessment, Family Risk Re-assessment, and Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- The development of a Dual Pathway for the referral and assessment of vulnerable children and families. Dual pathway refers to a service system that provides two channels for reporting concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and families. Where concerns are raised about a child being harmed, or at substantial risk of being harmed, a report is made to the child protection agency for the investigation of the allegations. In situations where concerns are raised regarding the vulnerability of a family and their children but the risk of harm does not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, a referral can be made to a community-based intake service.

# The year ahead

- Establishment of the Community Child Safety and Wellbeing Teams which will see, for the first time ever, child protection staff based in remote communities. The Teams will bring together locally-based government and non-government staff who deliver care and protection services. They will work with communities to provide vulnerable children, youth and families with more coordinated, collaborative and targeted services focused on safety and wellbeing.
- The introduction of a new Grants Management System is a joint initiative with the Department of Health. The new system will support an end-to-end grants management process, making administration of grants easier and streamlining the process for external service providers that receive funding from DCF.
- Leading the development and implementation of new Multi-agency Assessment and Co-ordination (MAC) teams. The teams will facilitate better outcomes for high-risk children, young people and families by providing a forum for information exchange, consultation and collaboration between key government and non-government agencies involved in the child protection service system. The first two MAC teams will be operational by the end of 2011 and will be linked to Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital.
- Introducing amendments to the *Care and Protection of Children Act* to enhance information sharing between DCF, other departments and the non-government sector. The Department will also be pursuing other general amendments to the Act recommended by the Board of Inquiry, recent coronial inquiries and from various stakeholders, both internal and external.

Activities at the Alice Springs Youth Hub in 2011-2012 will build on the strong foundation work over the past year, including the delivery of DCF programs from the Hub, negotiations with non-government organisations to co-locate at the Hub and the hosting of inter-agency meetings of government and non-government service providers.

The Department will also lead the development of three new whole-of-government policies during 2011-2012 – a women's policy following on from the final report against *Building on Our Strengths: A Framework for Action for Women in the Northern Territory 2008-2012*; a youth policy succeeding *Building a Better Future for Young Territorians*; and a Northern Territory violence against women policy, including an action plan to implement the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children 2011 – 2022*.

The 2011-2012 year promises to be an exciting and action filled year for the Department of Children and Families as staff deliver services and programs to build thriving communities, support strong families and keep children safe.



# About us

## Who we are and what we do

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was formed on 1 January 2011 to provide dedicated services to support the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people, individuals and families in the Northern Territory.

DCF reports to the Ministers for Children and Families, Child Protection, Women's Policy and Young Territorians. Internal governance is the responsibility of the Executive Leadership Group, chaired by the Chief Executive with membership comprised of all Executive Directors, Directors and the Senior Director Strategic Reform and Accountability Team.

DCF has provided services to a population of about 220 000 people in an area covering more than 1.3 million square kilometres. DCF has staff located in towns and communities throughout the Territory, including the five main service centres of Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy.

The Department advocates for the development of thriving communities and strong families to create safe environments for children and provides services for:

- children and young people who experience harm or neglect
- children requiring permanent placements through adoption

- parents who need support to safely care for their families
- young people requiring care and support
- families experiencing domestic and family violence or escaping violence
- people who are homeless and requiring supported accommodation
- young people through initiatives that promote their positive achievements, and
- the equity and advancement of women.

DCF is also the lead agency implementing the Government's response to the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry report *Growing them strong, together*.

The Department's core values are:

- quality and professionalism
- collaboration and partnership
- accountability and integrity
- respect and diversity and
- compassion and justice.



DCF's vision is to create an organisation that is characterised by:

- **quality practice standards** underpinned by evidence-driven practice and decision making, accountability, transparency and responsibility
- **delivery of real improvements and innovative solutions** that make a positive difference to the long term life chances for our Territory children, youth and families
- a **healthy work environment** that is welcoming, challenging, respectful, diverse and safe
- **quality staff** who are well supported and trained, client focused and who work productively as a team with our many partners to respond to, and resolve, highly complex issues
- **strong leaders** and managers who continue to develop our staff, improve the professional workforce culture and create a workplace of choice, and
- **highly functional support systems and processes** that result in timely and just decision making and record management.

## Our clients

The Department provides support and services to children, young people, individuals and families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, foster and kinship carers and people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. DCF works with non-government organisations and other Northern Territory and Australian Government departments to provide safe environments for children, youth, individuals, and families; to ensure active youth participation in society; and to promote gender equity for all Territorians.

## Our budget

The Department's 2010-2011 budget of \$182 million delivered a variety of services, including family and parent support, child protection, out-of-home care, youth justice and youth engagement, family violence and sexual assault services.

Many of the services were delivered by DCF and through partnerships with non-government service providers.

## Our people

As at 30 June 2011, DCF had 653 employees, 92 per cent of whom provided direct client contact services.

Fifteen per cent of staff were employed on a part-time basis.

Fourteen per cent of our workforce identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the Department's human resources records and two per cent identified themselves as having a disability.

# About us

## Our environment

A number of external factors impact on DCF's service delivery. These include:

- Increased expectations for better service delivery
- Increased demand for services, including increases in the number of child protection notifications received by the Department
- A diverse population, sparsely distributed across a large geographic area
- A highly mobile population, both within the Territory and across jurisdictional borders
- Population growth contributed to by high birth rates among young mothers
- Significant gap in socio-economic and health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations
- A client group that is considered the most vulnerable
- Local, national and international shortages of skilled workers in the community services sector coupled with high staff turnover
- The ever-increasing need to recruit a large number of our professional stream workforce from interstate and overseas
- Housing pressures in remote communities with demand exceeding supply and sustained chronic overcrowding
- A high cost of living, notably for accommodation and food necessities
- The Northern Territory Government's response to the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory recommendations, and
- Major national reforms and initiatives including the Northern Territory Emergency Response.



## Our contribution to NT Government targets

The Northern Territory Government's 20-year strategic plan, *Territory 2030* includes a number of objectives, targets and actions to which the Department of Children and Families contributes through the work that it does.

The objectives in which DCF plays a key role are:

### Society

**Objective 1:** The Territory offers affordable and appropriate housing that meets the varying needs of Territorians

- Improve access to accommodation: by 2030 every Territorian will have access to appropriate accommodation

**Objective 4:** Ensuring public safety

- Keep Territory children safe from all forms of abuse
- Increase the number of Territory families who can stay together

**Objective 5:** Investing in and valuing our people, cultures and communities

- Improve Indigenous employment rates
- The level of volunteering in the Northern Territory is at 50% participation rate or higher by 2020

- The Territory is a community where carers enjoy good health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security; and caring is recognised as a shared responsibility of family, community and government
- Increase the number of Territorians from different backgrounds in leadership positions

### Health and Wellbeing

**Objective 2:** The health and wellbeing of Territorians will be better at all stages of the life course

- By 2030, make major gains in Indigenous maternal and early childhood health and development
- By 2030, make major gains in the health and wellbeing of young Territorians



# About us

## Knowledge, Creativity and Innovation

**Objective 1:** Develop a focus on research and innovation

- Increase government expenditure on research and development

Specific actions for which the Department of Children and Families has lead responsibility include:

- Reduce the number of Territorians being turned away from supported accommodation services for people who are homeless or who are escaping domestic and family violence (*Society - Objective 1*)

- As per the national target, substantiated cases of child abuse in the Northern Territory will decrease by 20 per cent by 2030 (*Society – Objective 4*)
- By 2030, the Northern Territory rate of children placed in out-of-home care arrangements is similar to the national rate, with similar rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children (*Society – Objective 4*)
- Increase the proportion of Territory women on boards and committees, in senior public sector positions, in elected positions, and self-identifying as holding a leadership position (*Society – Objective 5*)

Territory 2030 has a vision that:

*‘...the Northern Territory, as an inclusive society, values and embraces cultural diversity and promotes gender equity as a right for all Territorians.’*

The Department’s Office of Women’s Policy advocates for a whole-of-government approach to gender equality. The Northern Territory Government’s women’s policy, *Building on Our Strengths: A Framework for Action for Women in the Northern Territory 2008-2012*, has five key priority areas for action: women’s economic security, health and wellbeing, leadership and participation, safety and life balance.





## Departmental reporting requirements

The Northern Territory Government's annual Budget Papers include five outputs which frame the Department's reporting requirements.

These outputs are:

1. Family and Parent Support Services
2. Child Protection Services
3. Out of Home Care Services
4. Youth Services
5. Family Violence and Sexual Assault Services.

Each output contains indicators to measure some of the Department's activities.

The Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory recommended annual reporting against specified indicators. Four of the indicators were assigned a high urgency rating requiring immediate action and are included in this report.

The recommendations are:

*Recommendation 53:* That Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from recent Coronial Inquests and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

*Recommendation 54:* That Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from the High Risk Audit and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

*Recommendation 55:* That Northern Territory Families and Children continues to support and influence the introduction and implementation of the *National Standards for Out of Home Care* and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

*Recommendation 135:* That Northern Territory Families and Children develops Key Performance Indicators to demonstrate the goals of Aboriginal workforce planning, with annual reporting on achievements.

The Annual Report also includes activities carried out by DCF in implementing *Territory 2030*.



# About us



## *Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Worker Program*

The Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Program (RAFCP) provides responsive and culturally appropriate child protection services to remote Aboriginal children and families by employing, training and supporting local Aboriginal people to work in their communities. During 2010-2011, Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers (RAFCW) were employed in 13 communities throughout the Northern Territory, and in 2011-2012, more workers will be employed in other communities. The RAFCP is primarily staffed by Aboriginal people, the majority of whom live and work in their communities. RAFCWs possess language skills, have established relationships and knowledge of the families and clan groups in their community and nearby communities, and knowledge of Aboriginal culture and law. Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers are leaders in their communities and are supported by Team Leaders who live in the regional centres and visit their communities.

The RAFCWs work with DCF staff, government and community-controlled services and Aboriginal families to provide early intervention services, respond to safety issues as they arise within Aboriginal families and communities and through the child protection system. This is done through a referral system. Referrals can be received through self referrals from community members, referrals from government and non-government agencies and from operational DCF staff who have clients from remote communities. The RAFCP is also involved in a number of early intervention programs and targeted activities for 'at risk' young people and families. Many of the staff sit on local reference groups and committees to support community initiatives relating to safety in the family environment and the broader community.



# Our finances in review

## Funding

Funding is provided to the Department of Children and Families for a range of services. Funding includes:

- Parliamentary appropriations from the Northern Territory Government for family and parent support, child protection, out-of-home care, youth, family violence and sexual assault services
- Revenue from the Australian Government (such as specific purpose payments and National Partnership Agreement payments) for child protection, homelessness, family violence and Indigenous services.

During 2010-2011, the Department of Children and Families received income from:

- Grants and subsidies: \$8.49 million
- Northern Territory Government appropriations: \$113.48 million
- Australian Government appropriations: \$16.52 million
- Sales of goods and services: \$0.35 million
- Other income: \$3.26 million.

## Expenditure

The Department's total operating expenses for 2010-2011 were \$146.57 million. These included:

- Employee expenses: \$55.22 million
- Grants and subsidies: \$61.64 million
- Purchase of goods and services: \$25.75 million
- Depreciation and amortisation: \$0.41 million
- Other administrative expenses: \$3.56 million

### *Launching the "Moving On - After Care Support and Brokerage Service"*

The "Moving On - After Care Support and Brokerage Service" was launched by Minister Kon Vatskalis on 19 May 2011. The service is a Territory-wide service delivered by Anglicare NT in partnership with the Department of Children and Families.

The service is for young people who have left the care of the Department or those who are transitioning from care. It provides information, assessment, referral, advocacy, support and some case management. The services provide young people with a Leaving Care Plan that is individualised to meet their needs.



# Our key achievements

## Responding to the Board of Inquiry recommendations

In November 2009, in response to growing evidence that the child protection system in the Northern Territory was not working in the best interests of Territory children and families, the Government commissioned a Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory.

The Board of Inquiry was co-chaired by Dr Howard Bath, Professor Muriel Bamblett AM, and Dr Rob Rosebury, and was wide ranging, receiving more than 200 submissions from organisations and individuals. It incorporated consultation within communities and regional centres and pulled together evidence from a range of reports and from a reference panel comprised of experts from around Australia.

In October 2010, the Board of Inquiry presented its report to the Northern Territory Government. The report, *Growing them strong, together* contains 147 recommendations for fundamental reform to all areas of the child protection system in the Northern Territory. All recommendations were given a level of urgency for commencing implementation - urgent (within six months), semi-urgent (within 18 months), and important but not urgent (within two to three years).

The Northern Territory Government immediately announced support for the recommendations and directed the then-Department of Health and Families to start implementing these recommendations. This included establishing a new agency dedicated to child safety and wellbeing in order to better respond to the Board of Inquiry's recommendations. The Government

further directed the Department to develop a comprehensive response to the Board of Inquiry recommendations, including a plan for their implementation over the five year period from 2011-2015.

The Department of Children and Families is responding to the Board of Inquiry recommendations. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was established 1 January 2011 and a Strategic Reform and Accountability Team was created to work within the new Department to co-ordinate the implementation, and report against the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry.

A Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee was appointed by the Minister for Children and Families and met for the first time in February 2011. *Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework* was launched at Parliament House on 21 February 2011. Developed by DCF, it is the Northern Territory Government's response to *Growing them strong, together*. The Strategic Framework includes seven main areas of reform:

- Supporting and Strengthening Families - enhanced family support systems
- Keeping Kids Safe - statutory intervention and out of home care
- A Strong and Effective Legal Framework - legislation change and court reform
- Working Together - community collaboration
- Our People - workforce



# Our key achievements

- Healing, Growing, Walking Together  
- Aboriginal service sector and community capacity
- Building a Stronger, Better, More Accountable System - governance and regionalisation.

As of 30 June 2011, significant activities had been undertaken in response to the Board of Inquiry recommendations, some of which are reported as key achievements. Notably, the backlog of child protection investigations identified by the Board of Inquiry was reduced from 870 cases in October 2010 to zero by May 2011 through secondment of New Zealand child protection workers to the Department.

As reported in the 'Our People' section of the Annual Report, additional front line child protection workers have been recruited to the Department and new positions have been created to meet child protection needs. Legislative changes have been made to the *Care and Protection of Children Act* to extend the powers of the Children's Commissioner and a major review of this Act started in June 2011. The Department provided funding to the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) to support the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, Youth and Families Peak Body. This Peak Body will support the development of Aboriginal child and family wellbeing and safety, and child protection agencies.

## Establishing a new Department

The new Department of Children and Families started on 1 January 2011, with the ambitious and critical agenda of building a new child protection and family support system over the next five years. An interim organisational structure for the new Department was released in early February 2011.

Three operational regions were established as a priority. These regions include the following areas:

- **Greater Darwin** - Darwin Municipality, Darwin Rates Act Area, Palmerston Municipality
- **Katherine and Northern** - Katherine, Roper Gulf, Victoria Daly, East Arnhem (including Nhulunbuy and Alyangula Unincorporated Areas), West Arnhem, Tiwi Islands, Litchfield Municipality, Coomalie Shire, Unincorporated Area (Northern Region), Wagait Shire, Belyuen
- **Central Australia** - Alice Springs Municipality, Barkly Shire, Central Desert Shire, MacDonnell Shire, Unincorporated Area (Southern Region - Yulara).

The three new Regional Directors were announced in July 2011 and operational services will move to more integrated regional management over the next 12 months. Regionalisation will allow for improved co-ordination and integration of services on the ground, giving each region the flexibility to provide services that are relevant and culturally appropriate to local communities.

# Our key achievements

## ***Stop the Hurting, Start the Healing* campaign to reduce family violence**

In April 2011, the Department launched the second phase of a social marketing campaign aimed at reducing domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory to support the introduction of domestic/family violence mandatory reporting in the NT. The campaign titled, *Stop the Hurting, Start the Healing*, encourages men who use violence in their family relationships to: 'stop...think about what you've got to lose...do whatever it takes to cool off'.

The six-month campaign included media advertisements in English and other languages, to acknowledge the diverse nature of the Territory population.

The campaign supported the Council of Australian Government's *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*, which recognises that perpetrator intervention and education needs to be an essential part of an effective plan to reduce family violence.

The campaign was developed from research with Northern Territory men who self-identified as using violence against their partners. The research found that Territory men care very much about how their children perceive them. This is important, as research in Australia and internationally, has found that children who are exposed to domestic and family violence are at significant risk of continuing the cycle of violence in adulthood with their own children and partners.

A range of resources and information was produced and made available via the *Stop the Hurting, Start the Healing* campaign website at <<http://www.stopthehurting.nt.gov.au>>.

## **Establishing the Domestic and Family Violence Hospitals Project**

The Domestic and Family Violence Policy Unit, in partnership with the Acute Care Division of the Department of Health, established a Domestic and Family Violence Hospitals Project in 2010.

International, national and local research has shown Emergency Departments of hospitals to be one of the most opportunistic places to identify and offer services to people experiencing violence in their intimate and family relationships. This is because of the very high number of people who require medical assistance, often repeatedly, as a result of violence. In order to better connect with Territorians who have experienced family violence, Project Social Workers and Aboriginal Domestic and Family Violence Workers commenced working in hospitals in Katherine, Gove and Darwin.

The Domestic and Family Violence Hospitals Project aims to:

- Provide specialist services to people experiencing domestic and family violence who present to hospitals. This includes identification, assessment, intervention, safety planning, referral and follow-up
- Consult, support and provide information to medical and allied health staff in Emergency Departments and hospitals in order to respond to domestic and family violence, and meet the mandatory reporting requirements of the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007*

# Our key achievements

- Develop good relationships and understanding between the hospital and community services to support people to stay safe, and
- Help with system change by developing local and NT-wide approaches, policies and protocols in NT hospitals for responding to domestic and family violence. This includes developing strong data collection tools.

## Reforming and restructuring Intake Services

This year, the Central Intake Team (CIT) and the After Hours Crisis Service planned for the amalgamation of a 24/7 child protection intake and after hours service. This means the Department can provide a professional and responsive service to new and existing clients, regardless of what time that contact is needed.

The CIT and the After Hours Crisis Service have been separate teams that were co-located and provided the first point of call, depending on the time of day, for anyone concerned about the wellbeing and safety of children. A review of these services in late 2010 recommended that the two teams should be restructured into one team. The benefits of creating one intake services team include a responsive child protection front line at all hours, improved intake processes that allow for high quality and timely responses to concerns, and providing work variety for professional staff which enhances recruitment and retention for this workgroup.

By 30 June 2011, a new telephone system had been installed that allows callers to leave a call back number if they are not able to wait in line. All calls receive a reply, and are monitored to ensure this is done. New workflow processes were designed to promote the capacity of team members to accept an incoming call and have carriage of subsequent actions.

## Implementing Structured Decision Making Assessment Tools

New Structured Decision Making (SDM) intake screening and response priority tools were implemented on 1 July 2010, representing one of the most significant changes in relation to decision making processes in the Department's Central Intake in recent years. The intake tools assist child protection staff in decision making regarding whether a call should be accepted for investigation (screening), and if so, how quickly the Department should respond (priority). The tools provide guidelines for decision making that produce clarity, consistency and transparency. Implementation included presentations to key external stakeholders across the Territory to provide information about the new tools and the information that callers should provide when making a notification to enable workers to make accurate decisions.

The staff at Central Intake were initially trained in the use of the assessment tools prior to their implementation, and training has continued throughout the year. Monitoring the use of the tools, in terms of the consistency of decision making, has been undertaken quarterly. The monitoring, training and support for the use of the SDM assessments has been bolstered by the employment of a SDM monitoring and support officer.

During 2010-2011, new safety and risk assessment tools were reviewed and developed for introduction on 1 July 2011. This included field testing of the new tools during March and April 2011 in different regions throughout the Northern Territory, and the provision of comprehensive staff education.

# Our key achievements

## Foster and Kinship Carer Recognition Program

The Foster and Kinship Carer Recognition Program was developed in September 2010 to recognise and formally acknowledge the dedication, commitment and achievement of foster and kinship carers throughout the Northern Territory. The Foster and Kinship Carer Recognition Program comprises three types of awards: Excellence, Service and Appreciation. The awards recognise the contribution of foster and kinship carers and their profound impact upon the lives of Territory children and young people.

### *Carer Excellence Awards*

The Carer Excellence Awards are presented to carers who have shown outstanding commitment and have made extraordinary contributions to the children and young people in their care. This award is selected through a nomination process. The inaugural award event was held on 17 June 2011 at Darwin Convention Centre, with presentation of certificates and gift vouchers to 11 carers and the presentation of a perpetual trophy by the Minister for Children and Families, Kon Vatskalis MLA.

### *Carer Service Awards*

The Carer Service Awards recognise the length of time registered carers have performed the role of carer. Carers reaching service milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years or more service were presented with a certificate, trophy and gift voucher. Awards were presented in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Darwin and Katherine from 25 May to 15 June 2011.

### *Carer Appreciation Awards*

The Carer Appreciation Awards recognise the day-to-day hard work and services of registered carers through a local award held on a monthly basis. These awards will commence in the 2011-2012 year.

## 2010 NT Homelessness Summit

The Department of Children and Families funded and co-convened the 2010 NT Homelessness Summit, held 10-11 November 2010 in Darwin. The Summit, co-convened with NT Shelter and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services, was attended by 130 representatives from the NT specialist homelessness services sector, the broader NT NGO sector and all levels of government.

The theme of the Summit was *Working Together to Reduce Homelessness* and provided an opportunity to:

- network and share information, skills and knowledge
- provide and seek input into the implementation of new initiatives to address homelessness, including national reforms relating to data collection, service integration and workforce development
- identify and agree on key issues, opportunities and priority areas for progression in 2011, and
- strengthen partnerships between all homelessness stakeholders to work together more effectively.

# Our key achievements

## National Youth Week 2011

National Youth Week 2011 was the biggest ever for the Northern Territory with more than 200 registered Youth Week events. A variety of sporting, recreational, cultural and development activities were held across the Northern Territory in the first week of April. Many youth and community groups independently funded and conducted activities as part of National Youth Week.

National Youth Week is held each year and provides opportunities for young people to express their ideas and raise concerns, and encourages the community to celebrate the positive contribution young Territorians make to their communities. The event has been part of the Territory's youth calendar since 2000 when it became a national initiative for all young Australians.

### *Mobile Outreach Service Plus*

Mobile Outreach Service (MOS) Plus is an Australian Government initiative delivered by the Department of Children and Families. The service provides therapeutic and educational support services for children and families experiencing trauma from all forms of abuse and neglect in 90 prescribed remote Aboriginal communities.

The MOS Plus therapeutic teams consist of a Counsellor and an Aboriginal Therapeutic Resource Officer who work side by side to ensure culturally secure responses. MOS Plus offices are located in Darwin and Alice Springs and in 2010-2011 staff travelled across the Territory to deliver services.

### *Outstanding Foster and Kinship Carers Recognised*

Eleven carers were recognised at the inaugural Foster and Kinship Carer Excellence Awards which were held at the Darwin Convention Centre on 17 June 2011.

The awards are part of the Northern Territory Carer Recognition Program which aims to highlight the commitment and dedication of foster and kinship carers.

Recipients of the 2011 NT Foster and Kinship Excellence Awards were:

- Elaine Drahm
- Michael Edwards
- Raymond Foster
- Arthur Hart
- Elizabeth Hart
- Ronald James
- Virginia James
- Monte Karena
- Teresa Niehus
- Christine Pilbrow
- John Pilbrow



# Our key achievements

## 2011 Tribute to Northern Territory Women

The Tribute to Northern Territory Women is an annual award designed to honour and acknowledge the substantial contribution women have made, and are making, to the economic, social and cultural life of the Territory. The 11 recipients for 2011 were:

Bindi Burnell - in recognition of her inspiration and leadership in educating young people and her advocacy for children with autism.

Dr Christine Connors - for her dedication and commitment to improving health outcomes for Territorians.

Lyn Conway - for her long term contribution and dedication to supporting positive educational outcomes for remote Aboriginal children.

Margaret Clinch - researcher, historian, and long time advocate and activist for local planning and the environment.

Audrey Gorring - for over 50 years of contribution to the arts and theatre in the Northern Territory and her long term dedication to volunteering.

Lesley King CM DStJ - in recognition of 33 years service as a volunteer and inspirational leader for St John Ambulance Australia.

Clare Martin - for her contribution as a pioneer in the political landscape of the Northern Territory and Australia.

Patricia McTaggart AM - for her inspiration, leadership and dedication to the preservation and promotion of Northern Territory Indigenous cultural security.

Ellen Ryan - for her contribution as a Territory Pioneer, founding entrepreneur and community activist and an inspiration to Territory women of her generation.

Dr Ella Stack CBE CSSStJ - in recognition as the Northern Territory's first female Mayor and for her instrumental role in the rebuilding of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy.

Betty Thompson - for her long term commitment and contribution of over 57 years to the Alice Springs region.



# Our key achievements

## Celebrating 100 years of International Women's Day

The centenary of International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March 2011. The year's theme for the Northern Territory was *Celebrating Our Past, Planning for Our Future*. The theme brought together historical pioneer women's achievements, the women's movement and future directions required for gender equality in the Northern Territory. The Office of Women's Policy organised a range of activities to commemorate this significant event.

A 'Territory Women' website was created to inform Territorians about the women's movement and the achievements of women over the past 100 years. It also included information about International Women's Day (IWD) and the IWD Northern Territory calendar of events which was made available at <<http://www.territorywomen.nt.gov.au>>.

The Centenary of Territory Women display was held at Darwin's Supreme Court in March 2011. The exhibition showcased the 2003-2010 Tribute to Northern Territory Women recipients and included two World War II Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) uniforms on loan from the Naval Historical Collection. The exhibition also included photos sourced from the Northern Territory Cattleman's Association, Girl Guides of the Northern Territory, National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame, NT Library, NT News, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services, the Royal Australian Navy and the Darwin Branch of the Ex-WRANS Association.

A special Centenary of International Women's Day Art Award was won by Bulmirri Yunupingu and Dhapanbal Yunupingu from Yirrkala with their artwork entitled 'Looking towards the future'. Samantha Singh's artwork, 'Water Lily', received a Highly Commended award. Both

pieces were displayed at the Centenary of Territory Women Exhibition.

During February and March 2011, posters celebrating the past 50 recipients of the Tribute to Northern Territory Women were displayed at the Darwin and Alice Springs Airports. The Alice Springs Airport display is now permanently housed in the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame.

A specially commissioned Centenary of International Women's Day flag flew at Parliament House during March 2011 to mark the significance of the 100 year milestone. The Office of Women's Policy provided special Centenary banners to the Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy regions in celebration of International Women's Day.

The *2011 International Women's Day Grants Program* provided \$30,000 in funding to 29 organisations to hold activities in local areas across the Northern Territory. Commemorative 100 years of International Women's Day t-shirts and tote bags were distributed to women, men and children of all ages, across the Territory through the recipients of the International Women's Day grants program. The largest contingent of Territorians wearing the purple t-shirts was seen at the International Women's Day march held in Darwin on 5 March 2011.



# Our reporting requirements

The Department of Children and Families reports against five output areas detailed in the Northern Territory Government's Budget Papers. The outputs are indicators of the range of services delivered via funds expended by the Department, as detailed in the financial statements.

The output areas are:

- Family and parent support services
- Child protection services
- Out-of-home care services
- Youth services
- Family violence and sexual assault services.

Some indicators for 2010-2011 have changed from previous years to align them with external data collection and reporting requirements.

The indicators are not intended to represent the full breadth of activity undertaken

by the Department, but rather provide a consistent means of reporting on the work the Department has undertaken over the financial year. Some additional information is also provided to show the breadth of activities that have occurred in relation to child protection services over the 2010-2011 year.

The Board of Inquiry report, *Growing them strong, together* included eight recommendations that referred to annual reporting.

Four recommendations were assigned the highest urgency level, requiring that action start within six months of the report being handed down.

These four recommendations have been actioned in this report with reporting against the other four recommendations to occur in the 2011-2012 financial year.

## ***Awards for young rural and remote Territory women***

The Hon. Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Women's Policy, presented two young women with awards sponsored by the Office of Women's Policy at the NT Cattlemen's Conference held on 1 April 2011. Moira Lanzarin was presented with a Young Leader Award for leadership in educating Territorians about economically and environmentally sustainable land practices and her strong commitment to the future development of the Territory cattle industry.

Trudi Oxley received the Recognition Award for driving innovation in cattle and land management projects across the Territory and her long-term commitment to community development and improving profitability, productivity and animal welfare in the cattle industry.



# Our reporting requirements

## Output performance reporting

### Output 1 – Family and Parent Support Services

	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Estimate	2010-2011 Actual	2011-2012 Budget
<b>Output cost</b>				
\$ millions	\$11.3	\$16.4	\$13.4	\$23.2
<b>Performance measure</b>				
Clients accessing crisis support services	3,500	3,500	N/A <sup>(1)</sup>	3,550
Number of crisis support days provided	334,100	334,100	N/A <sup>(1)</sup>	334,100
Forums, workshops and consultations for women's advancement	44	74	74	60
Grants issued for International Women's Day activities	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$20,000 <sup>(2)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> These data are obtained from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) national data collection published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. SAAP data are published one year in arrears and thus 2010-2011 data are not available at the time of writing. A new data system is being implemented that means current data will be available for the 2011-2012 reporting year.

<sup>(2)</sup> The estimate for International Women's Day activities in 2011-2012 is less than 2010-2011 because of an extra \$10,000 in the 2010-2011 budget for Centenary of International Women's Day activities.

Performance measures for Family and Parent Support Services include indicators for the provision of crisis support services and for activities undertaken for women's advancement. As the note to the table indicates, data for crisis support services are only available a year in arrears, although this will be changing in the future with a move from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) collection to the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC).

The SHSC replaces the previous SAAP collection and will provide an improved picture of homelessness based on client experience. Data will also be available in a timely manner for annual reporting.

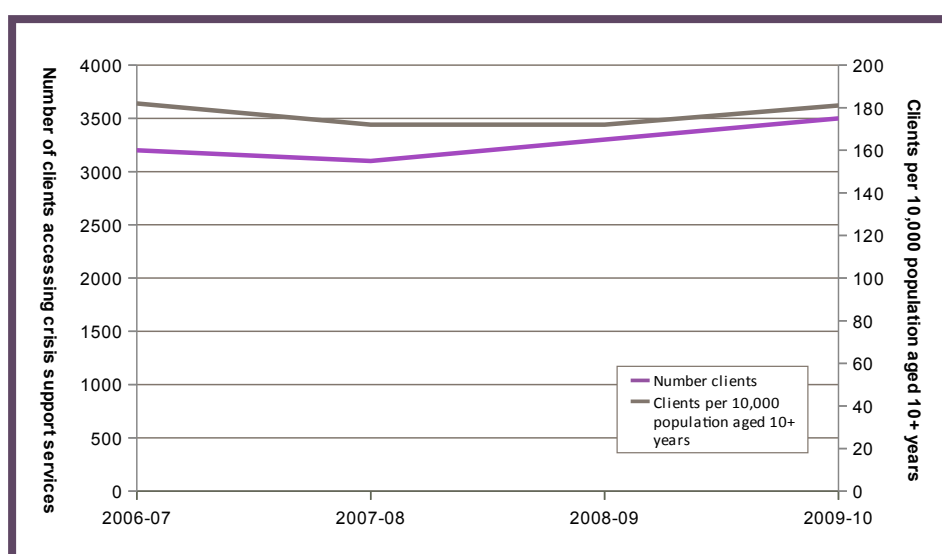
Facilitating the introduction of SHSC has been a highlight of the year for the Department's Homelessness Team. The team worked tirelessly to ensure that all NGO services delivering specialist homelessness services were ready for a new national data collection, effective as of 1 July 2011.

The Homelessness Team provided training on the SHSC in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. The Homelessness Team was recognised by the NGO sector for its professionalism, high quality training and for garnering support from the NGO sector.



# Our reporting requirements

From 2007-2008 there has been a steady increase in the number of clients accessing crisis support services, including accommodation services, from 3,100 clients in 2007-2008 to 3,500 in 2009-2010. While the number of clients increased by 400 over a three-year period, the number of clients per 10,000 population aged 10 years and older increased from 172 to 181 for the same time period.



Source: AIHW 2011. Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2009-10: Northern Territory. Cat. no. HOU 247. Canberra: AIHW. <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737419200>>.



# Our reporting requirements

As already noted in our key achievements, the Office of Women's Policy (OWP) played a pivotal role in ensuring the celebrations of the Centenary of International Women's Day supported Territory women have equitable participation in civil society. This year also saw development of a Women on Boards website, and research on pay equity, microcredit/small social enterprises and gender indicators.

The primary role of OWP is its support for the development and implementation of policy that achieves equitable outcomes for Territory women. To this end, OWP has supported the Minister for Women's Policy through the development of initiatives to incorporate gender equity measures into the *Working Futures Policy for Governance, Economic Development and Preventing Violence against Women*; women's leadership in remote communities and community engagement activities. The Office has provided policy advice to the Minister for Women's Policy and

to NT Government departments on gender equality issues, gender analysis and gender indicators. OWP has successfully represented the Northern Territory on national working groups to progress actions arising from the 2010 Commonwealth, States, Territories and New Zealand Ministerial Council on the Status of Women (MINCO).

Following the 2010 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) review of ministerial councils, MINCO was disbanded in preference for a new Select Council on Women's Issues. In keeping with commitments to strengthen gender equality it was identified as a cross cutting issue on the reform agendas. OWP has worked collaboratively with the Australian Government Office for Women, and other states and territories over the past 12 months to develop terms of reference and OWP continues to represent the Northern Territory women's issues at the national level.

## ***Roll Out of Initiatives under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness NT Implementation Plan***

The Department rolled out 11 initiatives under the *National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness Implementation Plan* during 2010-2011, including the establishment of:

- Anglicare NT's Youth Housing Options and Pathways Program (YHOPP) to provide support to young people aged 15 to 19 years to access medium to long term accommodation. Young people are supported by a client centred integrated service response aimed at improving their ability to live independently, and linking them to education, employment and training, thereby avoiding entering or re-entering homelessness. Anglicare and the YWCA are working in partnership to source accommodation for clients.
- A 26 bed transitional accommodation service for women and children is being run by Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter (DAIWS). This service provides semi-independent accommodation and support services to families for up to 12 months to help prepare them enter sustainable long-term housing arrangements.

# Our reporting requirements

## Output 2 – Child Protection Services

	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Estimate	2010-2011 Actual	2011-2012 Budget
<b>Output cost</b>				
\$ millions	\$28.5	\$37.6	\$38.9	\$51.3
<b>Performance measure</b>				
Number of child protection notifications received	6,589	5,580	6,533	5,650
Number of child protection investigations finalised	3,150	4,180	4,602	4,220
Investigations of reports commenced				
• Category 1: within 1 day of assessment				
Number	341		762	
Per cent	82%	100%	74%	100%
• Category 2: within 3 days of assessment				
Number	510		711	
Per cent	50%	80%	41%	80%
• Category 3: within 5 days of assessment				
Number	548		341	
Per cent	26%	70%	21%	70%

### *The Child and Parenting Support Team*

The Child and Parenting Support Team provides leadership in the development of policies and strategies that strengthen the ability of vulnerable families to care for and promote their children's development. The Team achieves this by focusing on prevention and early intervention approaches and enhancing the ability of services and communities to support families.

Key activities throughout 2010-2011 included:

- Introducing Counsel the Family on Care for Child Development (see page 37)
- Co-ordinating the *'Effective Integration of Services for Children and Families Symposium'* in August 2010 in partnership with the Department of Education and Training and Menzies School of Health Research
- Redevelopment of the families website, located at <http://childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Families/>, and
- Promotion of child friendly safe houses in remote communities.

# Our reporting requirements

Notifications of child harm in the Northern Territory stabilised between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. It is expected that notifications of child harm will remain high with enhanced public awareness of child safety through public awareness campaigns and the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory.

The number of child protection investigations finalised is a new performance measure, which reflects the number of investigations finalised during the financial year. The increase from 2009-2010 to 2010-2011 reflects the significant work by the Department in early 2011 to clear the backlog of notifications as identified in the Board of Inquiry report *Growing them strong, together*.

There has been a significant increase in the number of child protection investigations completed during the 2010-2011 financial year with 1,452 more investigations being completed when compared with 2009-2010. This increase in completed investigations has also resulted in increases in compliance for investigations to commence within specified timeframes. Of the Child in Danger and Child at Risk investigations commenced, a total of 1,473 investigations were completed on time in 2010-2011 compared with 851 in 2009-2010. The categories Child in Danger and Child at Risk relate to children assessed as being at the highest risk.

Staff report that following the introduction of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools on 1 July 2010 there has been an increase in the proportion of notifications that were assessed as Category 1 and 2.

Work undertaken by the Backlog Team to address the 870 outstanding cases as identified in the Board of Inquiry report resulted in a decrease in the percentage of Category 3 reports that commenced on time.

Direct comparisons between 2010-2011 and previous years should be viewed with caution because there are significant differences in the treatment of intakes arising from the introduction of the SDM and the elimination of the backlog of outstanding cases as identified in the Board of Inquiry report.

New annual reporting indicators have been developed for 2010-2011. These indicators provide further information about child protection notifications and investigations by region. These data reports will become part of the Department's ongoing monitoring of child protection services.

The indicators detailed in the following tables are:

- Number of child protection notifications received
- Number of child protection notifications received that proceeded to investigation
- Number of child protection investigations by investigation outcome
- Number of child protection investigations finalised by time taken to complete investigation from date notification received.

# Our reporting requirements

Region <sup>(1)</sup>	Child protection notifications 2010-2011		
	Notifications received	Notifications that proceeded to investigation	
	Number	Number	Per cent
Greater Darwin	2398	1,409	59
Katherine & Northern	1,701	1,078	63
Central Australia	2,138	1,382	65
NT Wide	296	125	42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,533</b>	<b>3,994</b>	<b>61</b>

(1) Region in which the service where notification received is located.

Region <sup>(1)</sup>	Outcome of child protection investigations (number) commenced during 2010-2011				
	Finalised investigations			In progress	Total
	Substantiated	Not substantiated	Closed – no outcome possible <sup>(2)</sup>		
Greater Darwin	443	620	178	65	1,306
Katherine & Northern	388	323	53	58	790
Central Australia	544	334	221	108	1,207
NT-wide	266	244	36	113	691
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>3,994</b>

(1) Region in which the service where investigation was carried out is located. This may be different from the region in which the service where the child protection notification was received is located.

(2) An investigation that is closed with no outcome possible is a notification made between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 which was investigated, but where the investigation was not able to be finalised in order to reach the outcome of substantiated or not substantiated. These files would be closed for administrative purposes. This may happen, for example, in cases where the family have relocated to outside the Territory.

Region <sup>(1)</sup>	Investigations finalised (number) 2010-2011						
	Time taken to complete investigation from notification received date (days)						Total <sup>(2)</sup>
	≤7	8-28	29-62	63-90	91-181	182+	
Greater Darwin	180	315	233	143	263	569	1,703
Katherine & Northern	130	184	197	82	205	205	1,003
Central Australia	239	370	238	83	101	45	1,076
NT-wide	55	179	174	54	97	261	820
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>4,602</b>

(1) Region in which the service where investigation was carried out is located. This may be different from the region in which the service is located where the child protection notification was received.

(2) Total number of investigations finalised includes investigations that began during 2009-2010 and therefore numbers are greater than the number of investigation outcomes that commenced during 2010-2011.



# Our reporting requirements

The Youth Streetworks Outreach Service in Alice Springs has been expanded to operate seven nights a week since the beginning of 2011. The program has had great success in building relationships with young people on the streets and with other services. The team comprises four staff who conduct street based

outreach risk assessments, harm minimisation, education and accommodation options. In March 2011, the Youth Streetworks Outreach Service team moved to the Youth Hub, which has facilitated links with other service providers.

## ***Counsel the Family on Care for Child Development***

Representatives from Department of Children and Families, Department of Health, Department of Education and Training and Menzies School of Health Research have partnered in the initial phases of the Care for Child Development (CCD) in the Northern Territory. CCD is a World Health Organisation and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) program. CCD is an evidence-based approach to increase bonding and attachment between parents/caregivers and their children and has been shown to improve child development and decrease child abuse and neglect. Care for Child Development training provides a practical framework for practitioners working with families to help increase parents' sensitivity and responsiveness to their child, including their physical care and cognitive stimulation.

CCD was piloted with health, education, child protection and family support staff in Yirrkala, Galiwin'ku and Darwin. Evaluation of these pilots is informing the development of an implementation plan for rolling out CCD in the NT. The plan is being developed by DCF in collaboration with the partner agencies. Trainees have identified how they plan to use

the CCD approach in their work with parents, carers, families and children, including at playgroups, during home visits, as a part of case studies and to assist parents filling out clinical forms.

Trainees in Galiwin'ku provided very positive feedback about the course and believe CCD is relevant and valuable in the NT:

*"I've loved learning new skills to help families in my work. I'm sure I'll use these skills all of the time."*

*"I have learnt a new thing about mothers and baby [sic] and I could work with mums and babies in a sensitive and good way."*

Darwin trainees said:

*"The course was very informative and contained really useful information. The step by step guide enables me to feel more confident to talk with clients about parenting issues".*

*"Really enjoyed it and I am keen to take back what I learnt to my work and implement it".*

# Our reporting requirements

## Output 3 – Out of Home Care Services

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	
	Actual	Estimate	Actual	Budget
<b>Output cost</b>				
\$ millions	\$34.8	\$41.1	\$52.3	\$49.7
<b>Performance measure</b>				
Number of children in out-of-home care as at 30 June	551	650	634	700
Number of days of out-of-home care	182,810	215,000	215, 501	220,000
Number of children admitted to out-of-home care	378	280	356	285
Proportion of children on a Care and Protection Order that exited care after less than 12 months who had one or two placements	94%	85%	94%	80%

Out-of-home care includes a range of placements for children requiring care, including family group homes, foster care, living with relatives or other adults, and boarding schools. The number of children in out-of-home care as at 30 June counts the number of children in out-of-home care at any time during the financial year. It is a new

reporting measure for the Department. The number of children admitted to out-of-home care is affected by child movements in and out of hospital, boarding school, and/or juvenile detention placements. Children may transition into other types of care once a suitable family carer or foster carer is located.

### ***New research into ‘False positive in the diagnosis of sexually transmitted Chlamydia trachomatis infection in children’***

A research proposal from the Menzies School of Health Research with support and collaboration from the Department's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) successfully won a three-year grant for \$700,000 from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Generally children acquire sexually transmitted infections in the same way as adults do, through sexual intercourse, which by definition is abuse. With alarmingly high positive results, especially for Chlamydia, questions have been raised about whether other modes of transmission were possible. This study represents a first step in trying to get a better scientific understanding of whether there is any basis to concerns expressed by a range of professionals including doctors, child protection workers, police and the courts in relation to possible sources of false positive test results for Chlamydia in children and diagnostic test malfunction. It is hoped that the research will provide new knowledge that will assist DCF in determining whether a child protection/police response is required.



# Our reporting requirements

## Output 4 – Youth Services

	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Estimate	2010-2011 Actual	2011-2012 Budget
<b>Output cost</b>				
\$ millions	\$14.10	\$16.6	\$15.60	\$18.0
<b>Performance measure</b>				
Number of grants issued for youth advancement activities	101	100	128	100
Number of Family Responsibility Agreements	N/A	36	81	42

Performance measures for youth services include indicators of the number of grants issued for youth advancement activities and the number of active Family Responsibility Agreements, which is a new measure for 2010-2011. The new measure was introduced to better reflect the activities and outcomes of the Youth Services Branch.

The Office of Youth Affairs (OYA) is responsible for active engagement with young people and for the development of policy that advances youth wellbeing throughout the Northern Territory. In 2010-2011 this was achieved through a variety of mechanisms, including the youth grants program and providing secretariat support to the Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians (see Appendix 2 for details about members). There was unprecedented demand for the youth grants program in 2010-2011 and extra expenditure was endorsed to meet this demand.

Participation in National Youth Week celebrations during the first week of April 2011 was the highest in the NT's history. Thousands of young Territorians took part in more than 200 registered events and activities across the Northern Territory.

The Office of Youth Affairs launched a new website in June 2011 with a major focus of keeping young Territorians informed about local activities including National Youth Week, Youth Engagement Grants, the Youth

Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians, the Youth Policy review and a calendar of events. Young people from around the Territory were consulted during development of the site. The website can be viewed at <<http://www.youth.nt.gov.au>>.

OYA has also been developing a new whole-of-government youth policy for the Northern Territory, which will be released for consultation in 2011-2012.

DCF administers three key elements of the Northern Territory Government's Youth Justice Strategy:

- Policy and funding for three youth camp programs operated by Brahminy Group, Balunu Foundation and Tangentyere Council
- Provision of secretariat support to the Youth Justice Advisory Committee (YJAC), and
- Coordination, monitoring and reporting of the Family Responsibility Program (FRP) and operation of the Family Support Centres in Darwin and Alice Springs.

# Our reporting requirements

Annual funding for youth camps is \$1 million. In 2010-2011, DCF commissioned a review of the Northern Territory's Youth Camps Program. The review was completed in January 2011 and found that there was evidence that the program had a positive impact on high risk offending behaviours. The review identified areas requiring development for each of the three service providers and provided valuable information about development of the model overall. DCF will lead the development of these models for future consideration in 2011-2012.

Family Support Centres provide services to families to promote the safety and well-being of young people and to support parents to exercise appropriate control over their behaviour. This is done through entering into a Family Responsibility Agreement with families, or working with families who have a Family Responsibility Order made by the Youth Justice Court.

There were 81 Family Responsibility Agreements (FRAs) active during the 2010-2011 year, 14 of which were carried forward from the previous year.

In 2010-2011, the Family Support Centres introduced a number of reforms to increase the activity under the Family Responsibility Program. These reforms included:

- Finalising the Family Support Centre Practice Framework
- Reviewing and increasing case loads
- Introducing a requirement that all families supported by the Family Support Centres are subject to a Family Responsibility Agreement
- Streamlining referral processes and documentation
- Introducing intake and case allocation timeliness measures, and
- Specifying the duration of a Family Responsibility Agreement for up to 6 months.

The YJAC met four times in 2010-2011 and provided expert advice to the Minister on youth justice issues.

## Output 5 – Family Violence and Sexual Assault Services

	2009-2010	2010-2011		2011-2012
	Actual	Estimate	Actual	Budget
<b>Output cost</b>				
\$ millions	\$24.6	\$29.3	\$26.3	\$39.9
<b>Performance measure</b>				
Number of clients seeking shelter from violence through:				
- NGO Providers	N/A	1,665	N/A <sup>(1)</sup>	1,800
- Remote Safe Places	N/A	415	642	420
Incidents of new sexual assault cases receiving support	1068	850	901	900

<sup>(1)</sup> These data are obtained from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) national data collection published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. SAAP data are published one year in arrears and thus 2010-2011 data are not available at the time of writing. A new data system is being implemented that means current data will be available for the 2011-2012 reporting year.

# Our reporting requirements

During 2010-2011 there was a continued increase in core funding for specialist domestic/family violence accommodation services in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Darwin. Funding has also enabled development of new Safe Houses in Wadeye and Gunbalunya. Ten non-government organisations from throughout the Territory provided a range of services to people experiencing domestic and family violence, including accommodation, counselling, support and education.

Safe Places provide support and a safe environment to help with the healing process for families experiencing family violence. There are 20 remote Safe Places located in 15 remote communities. Twelve of the Safe Places are for women and their children and eight are for men. The Women's Safe Places provide crisis accommodation for women and their children escaping family violence as well as a venue for respite, programs and activities. The Men's Places provide programs and activities to improve the health and wellbeing of men with the aim of reducing family violence.

The Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) respond to cases of sexual assault. A major achievement for the year was the opening of a new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Katherine in July 2010. The centre provides sexual assault response services and counselling to adults for recent sexual assault or assault that happened as a child. This was a recommendation from the *Little Children are Sacred* report and a commitment from the Northern Territory Government through the *Closing the Gap* initiative.

April 2011 was Sexual Assault Awareness Month and activities were organised by the Department's Sexual Assault Referral Centres across the Territory. In Darwin, staff participated in a community BBQ. The Barkly SARC co-ordinated several sexual

assault awareness workshops for staff from government and non-government services and set up an information stand at the local Barkly Shopping Centre. Katherine SARC hosted a lunch in partnership with CatholicCare to celebrate the Katherine child protection workers and acknowledge the difficult work they do.

## ***Young Territory Achievers Recognised***

Nine outstanding young Territorians and their achievements were recognised in the 2011 Northern Territory Young Achievers Awards as part of National Youth Week Celebrations.

Award recipients were:

**Daniel Walton** – Northern Territory Government Career Achievement Award

**Honeylyn Lisson** – Minister for Young Territorians Excellence in Youth Leadership Award

**Samantha Penny** – Department of Health Young Carer's Award

**Benjamin Campbell** – Conoco Phillips Environment Award

**Daly Kelly** – Somerville Community Services Award

**Matt Cornell** – Charles Darwin University Arts Award

**Rebecca Healy** – McArthur River Mining Regional & Rural Initiative Award

**Desmond Abbot** – Perkins Shipping Sports Award

**Jacinta Kelly** – Power and Water Science and Engineering Award

The overall *Channel 9* Young Achiever of the Year Award was won by **Daniel Walton**.

# Our reporting requirements

## Board of Inquiry reporting commitments

The Northern Territory Government has established the Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee to oversee the implementation of recommendations from the Board of Inquiry report *Growing them strong, together*. The Committee is chaired by Professor Graham Vimpani AM and reports through the Minister for Child Protection, the NT Parliament and the Territory community every six months.

The Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory made a number of recommendations relating to the development of indicators and the completion of recommendations from previous investigations and reports, to be included in the Annual Report. Eight recommendations specifically referred to the need to report on progress on an annual basis. In some cases, the need to develop a specific measure to benchmark progress was requested.

Some of the recommendations in relation to reporting were urgent and have been addressed as part of the six monthly report back to Government (see <http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au>). These have also been presented in this Annual Report as they form a benchmarking measure for ongoing annual reporting.

The eight recommendations (and the urgency level assigned to them) that referred to annual reporting were:

### Urgency level 1:

#### Recommendation 53:

That Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from recent Coronial Inquests and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

#### Recommendation 54:

That Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from the High Risk Audit and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

#### Recommendation 55:

That Northern Territory Families and Children continues to support and influence the introduction and implementation of the *National Standards for Out of Home Care* and reports progress in its Annual Report.

#### Recommendation 135:

That Northern Territory Families and Children develops Key Performance Indicators to demonstrate the goals of Aboriginal workforce planning, with annual reporting on achievements.

### Urgency level 2:

#### Recommendation 2:

That the Northern Territory Government develops a clear framework for the inclusion of Aboriginal people in child welfare as the basis of an Aboriginal child safety and wellbeing plan and that measures are developed against each key component of the framework with progress reported annually.



# Our reporting requirements

## Recommendation 22:

That Northern Territory Families and Children develops an indicator based on the provision of feedback to notifiers to be used in reporting on performance.

## Recommendation 59:

That Northern Territory Families and Children collects a range of care provider data as outlined in this Report and annually reports on progress towards “closing the gap” in standards of care provided for relative and non-relative care providers.

## Recommendation 110:

That Northern Territory Families and Children annually reports on compliance with sections 70, 71, 73, 74 and 76 of the *Care and Protection of Children Act* with respect to care plans.

In order to measure the overall success of the reform agenda, during 2011-2012 a performance management and evaluation framework will be developed.

Detailed reports on progress against Recommendations 53, 54 and 55 are provided in Appendix 4. Department activities to meet these recommendations are summarised below:

## Recommendations 53 and 54:

- Continuing implementation of recommendations arising from previous reviews and evaluations, including the *High Risk Audit*, the *Report in Respect of Baby BM* and the *Interim Progress Report on Intake and Response and Procedures*;
- Continuing implementation of recommendations arising from previous reviews and evaluations, including the *High Risk Audit*; and

- Reporting annually against the implementation of recommendations from previous reviews and evaluations (as shown in Appendix 4).

## Recommendation 55:

- Amending the CCIS (Community Care Information System) to improve recording and reporting in the out of home care system; and
- Monitoring and reporting performance of the care and protection system against national and Territory standards.

## Recommendation 135:

- Consultation with 135 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum regarding their workforce planning needs and the key workforce issues impacting on them;
- Developing an action plan to address the key priorities and recommendations from the Forum, as a basis for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan;
- Reporting against *Territory 2030* performance targets until agency-specific key performance indicators are developed; and
- Developing a Performance Management and Evaluation Framework for approval by the Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee.





# Our reporting requirements

## Territory 2030

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is meeting its responsibilities for implementation of *Territory 2030* actions through a range of activities, already reported in this section of the Annual Report. Actions for which the Department has lead responsibility include:

- Reduce the number of Territorians being turned away from supported accommodation services for people who are homeless or who are escaping domestic and family violence (Society - Objective 1);
- As per the national target, substantiated cases of child abuse in the Northern Territory will decrease by 20 per cent by 2030 (Society – Objective 4);
- By 2030, the Northern Territory rate of children placed in out-of-home care arrangements is similar to the national rate, with similar rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children (Society – Objective 4);
- Increase the proportion of Territory women on boards and committees, in senior public sector positions, in elected positions, and self-identifying as holding a leadership position (Society – Objective 5).

The Department's activities to reduce the number of Territorians turned away from supported accommodation services have been carried out under the *National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness*. During 2009-2010 (the most recent year for which data are available), turn-away as a proportion of people requiring new, immediate accommodation in

the Northern Territory was 47 per cent, a fall of four per cent from the previous year and lower than the national average of 53 per cent.

The *National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness* focuses on broad strategies to reduce homelessness and increase economic and social participation including:

- prevention and early intervention to stop people becoming homeless
- breaking the cycle of homelessness, and
- improving and expanding the service responses to homelessness.

The Department of Children and Families is managing 12 projects to implement the National Agreement. As of 30 June 2011, 11 of these projects had been established.

Targets to keep Territory children safe from all forms of abuse and to increase the number of Territory families that can remain together are being met through implementation of the *Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework*, developed in response to the Board of Inquiry Report into the Child Protection System. The Framework outlines how the Department will respond to the Board of Inquiry's 147 recommendations and has seven key reform areas:

- Keeping Kids Safe
- Supporting and Strengthening Families
- A Strong and Effective Legal Framework
- Working Together
- Our People
- Healing, Growing, Walking Together
- Building a Better, Stronger, More Accountable System.

# Our reporting requirements

The reform process, implemented by the Department of Children and Families and initially led by the Strategic Reform and Accountability Team, is creating a new child protection system in the Northern Territory. The system will have a specific focus on supporting Aboriginal families in rural and remote areas, improving the quality and capacity of frontline staff, establishing stronger and more supportive partnerships with foster carers and investing in non-government organisations to provide parenting support. The key changes being implemented include a mix of legislative reform, practice reform, and administrative reform.

The Department has also committed funding for the establishment of the Centre for Child Development and Education through the Menzies School of Health Research.

In early 2011, an audit of the Northern Territory's Residential Care System was conducted. The audit report was received in July 2011 from the NSW Office of Children's Guardian comprising an audit of Department files to assess the Territory against national out-of-home care standards. The results will be considered during 2011-2012 in the context of an Alternative Care Redesign Project as recommended by the Board of Inquiry.

In addition to the audit, DCF has now developed a full project brief for the redesign of alternative care in the Territory. This broadens the scope well beyond the original focus on residential care services only. Expertise has been engaged from other jurisdictions and coupled with significant Territory experience to develop a redesign process encompassing all parts of the alternative care continuum. This includes foster and kinship care, residential care, therapeutic options and strong non-government partnerships.

The Office of Women's Policy has developed a women's leadership action plan to address the *Territory 2030* target of increasing the number of Territorians from different backgrounds in leadership positions. This plan emerged from whole-of-government consultations. Work has also been carried out to update the NT Women on Boards Register, which went live in August 2010 <<http://womenonboard.gov.au>>. The Register enables women to manage their own details of experiences, interest and availability for board positions. All government boards and committees, private sector boards and community boards are able to lodge board vacancies online. The system automatically matches vacancies to suitable candidates who are members of the Women's Register.

## **Ngukurr Women's Safe Place**

Ngukurr is an Aboriginal community located 320kms southeast of Katherine with a population of about 1,500 people. The Ngukurr Women's Safe Place opened on 30 January 2009 and consists of five containers that have been retrofitted to provide an office block, an ablution block, two accommodation blocks that sleep four and a storage block. The Safe Place provides crisis accommodation for women and their children escaping violence, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The Safe Place works closely with Police, Night Patrol, the Community Health Centre and other services such as Legal Aid. The Safe Place is used as a venue for community activities and education programs relating to family violence prevention and strengthening family relationships. The Safe Place is also used by local women who drop in for a cup of tea and a chat. Women also use the Safe Place for respite from humbug and noise in their overcrowded homes. Seven local Aboriginal women are employed at the Ngukurr Safe Place. All have undertaken training to Certificate III level and receive ongoing administrative and service-based training.

# Governance and organisational structure

## Governance structure

The governance structure of the Department of Children and Families, as at 30 June 2011, is shown in the figure opposite. The Department reports to the Minister for Children and Families, Minister for Child Protection, Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Young Territorians. The Ministers are supported by the work of the Department and receive advice from five committees appointed by the relevant Minister (members as at 30 June 2011 are listed in Appendix 2).

These committees are:

- Northern Territory Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee
- Northern Territory Family and Children Advisory Council
- Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians
- Youth Justice Advisory Committee
- Screening Authority (Working With Children Clearances)

The Department of Health continued to provide corporate services to the Department of Children and Families following the establishment of DCF. The links between the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Health governance structures are reflected in the governance structure chart and show the shared service arrangements between the two agencies.

There are formal links to the following Department of Health Governance Committees:

- Executive Leadership Group
- Audit Committee

- Corporate Information Management Group
- Strategic Information Management Steering Committee
- Resource Management Committee
- Strategic Workforce Committee
- Department of Health and Union Consultative Committee, and
- Occupational Health and Safety Steering Committee.

In 2011-2012, the departments of Health and Children and Families will enter into a formal shared service arrangement for the delivery of corporate services of an advisory and transactional nature.

Five Corporate Governance Committees have been established by the Department of Children and Families (see Appendix 2 for a list of members as at 30 June 2011).

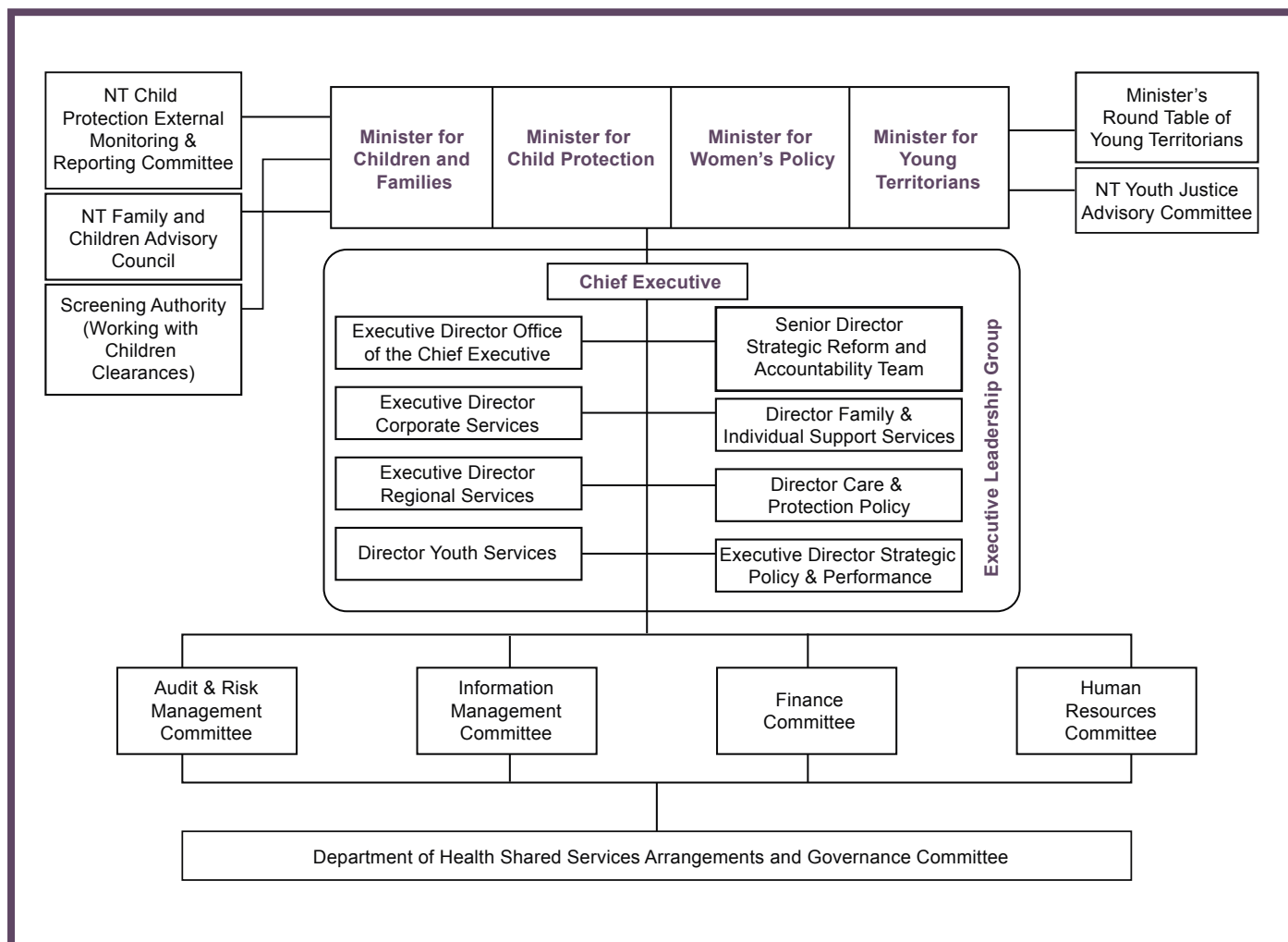
These are:

- Executive Leadership Group (ELG) - assists the Chief Executive with the strategic management and operation of the agency
- Audit and Risk Management Committee - provides independent and objective advice to help the Chief Executive in discharging her responsibilities under the *Financial Management Act*. This includes providing assurance that there are sufficient internal controls to appropriately manage the Agency
- Finance Committee - assists the Chief Executive with effective financial management of the Agency

- Human Resource Committee - provides guidance to the Chief Executive on the development and implementation of human resource management policy and planning. In 2011-2012, a sub-committee is being established to consider and provide advice on Occupational Health and Safety issues, and
- Information Management Committee - provides guidance to the Chief Executive on the development, management and use of information and communications resources and technology.

As at 30 June 2011, the Information Management Committee (IMC) was meeting as the Care and Protection Information Management Group (IMG), as originally established under the former Department of Health and Families. For 2011-2012, new Terms of Reference were developed to address all DCF client services and is now the DCF IMG. This Group reports to the broader Information Management Committee noted above.

## Department of Children and Families' Corporate Governance Structure



# Governance and organisational structure

## Organisational structure

With the creation of the new Department of Children and Families on 1 January 2011, an interim organisational structure was released in February 2011. The structure ensured the continued organisational and governance requirements from when Northern Territory Families and Children (NTFC) was a division of the former Department of Health and Families. The interim structure also facilitated improvements to the Northern Territory care and protection system. The organisational structure was independently reviewed and a new structure was released in August 2011 (see Appendix 5). A change management strategy will promote a smooth transition characterised by clear communication mechanisms.

A key feature of the interim structure is the transition to regionalisation of services. The aim of regionalisation is to improve integration and delivery of child protection and family support services at the local level while having strong policy and program development centrally. The three regions include Greater Darwin, Katherine and Northern, and Central Australia. The transition to regionalisation includes the creation of three Regional Director positions which will oversee the implementation of services to be delivered at a community level. The interim organisation structure shows services such as Alternative Care Services and Child Protection Services that will transition from a central model to a regional model during 2011-2012.

## Disaster welfare recovery

In accordance with the Northern Territory All Hazards Emergency Management Arrangements, established under the *NT Disasters Act 2008*, the Department is responsible for the leadership of disaster welfare recovery responses across the Northern Territory, after a disaster or emergency event. To build capacity as a new agency and to deliver welfare recovery services which are valued by disaster affected communities, DCF leverages off the expertise and support of other government agencies and our non-government partners. Depending on the nature and scale of the event, disaster welfare recovery responses may include:

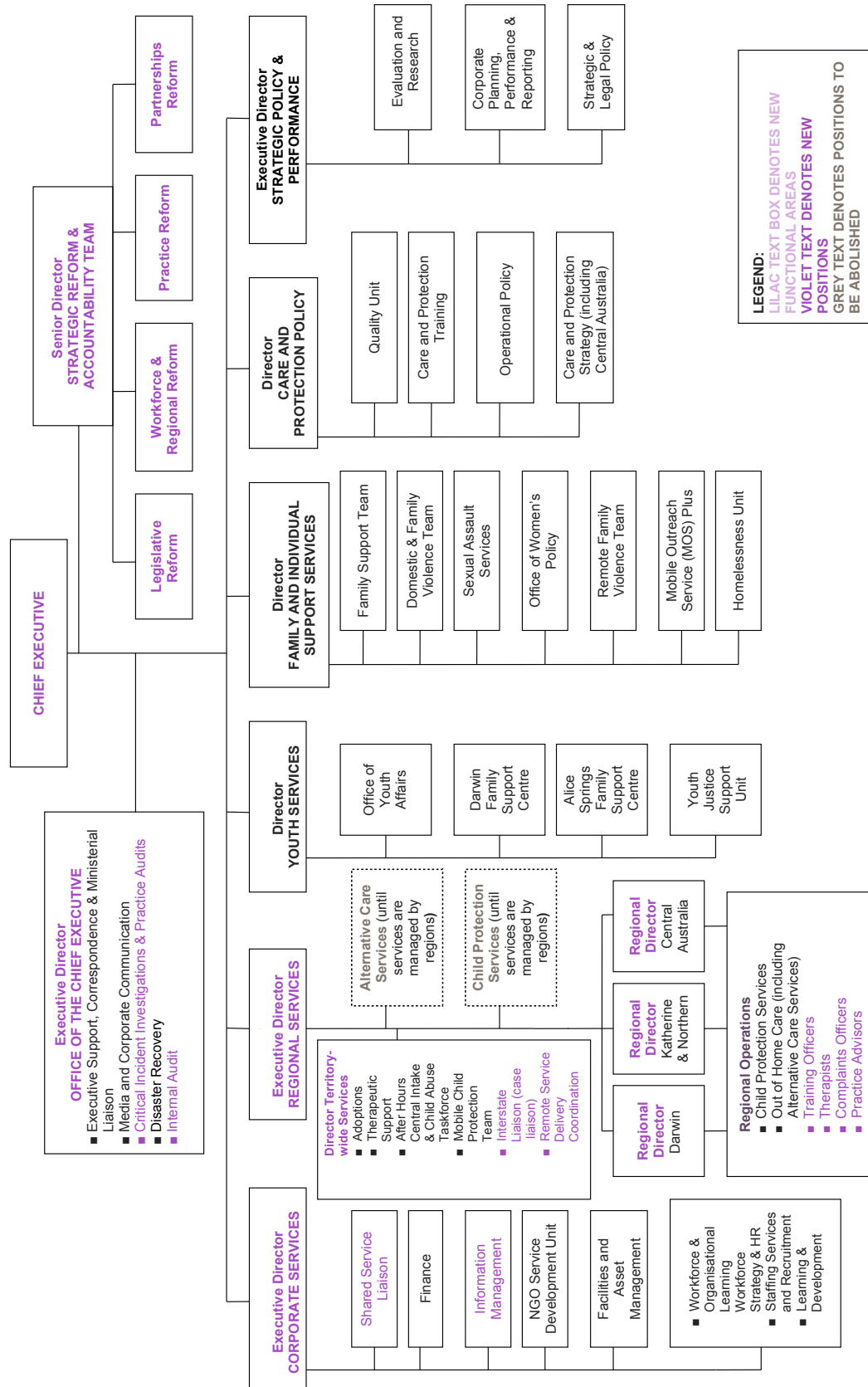
- conducting needs assessments of individuals and families affected by disaster events
- providing emergency support including food, shelter, clothing and personal support, and
- administration of emergency financial assistance.

DCF delivers these services through various channels which may include emergency evacuation shelters, recovery centres, outreach services and telephone assistance lines. In the coming year DCF will work with our government and non-government partners to strengthen its capacity, planning and coordination processes to ensure effective support for communities to access the assistance needed to recover from emergency and disaster events, and build resilience against future events.



## Department of Children and Families' Interim Organisational Structure

### DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES INTERIM STRUCTURE as at 01 February 2011 – 30 April 2011



# Governance and organisational structure

DCF is the lead agency to coordinate and deliver disaster welfare recovery services. In the severe weather prior to Cyclone Carlos in February 2011, the Department took on the additional responsibility of establishing and operating a shelter for homeless people at Foskey's Pavillion within the Darwin Showgrounds to protect them from the severe storm. This was the first time the NT Government had provided this type of emergency response for homeless people at the onset of a severe weather event.

The success of this response would not have been possible without the responsive support of staff and volunteers from DCF and other NTG agencies, non-Government organisations and the Australian Government who worked tirelessly to ensure that the immediate needs of the adults and children were met. Support services included: shelter security, shelter staffing and operations, initial health checks and first aid services, medical checks, bedding, food, clean clothing, educational and recreation equipment, entertainment, advice on accessing benefits and payments, and return to country support on closure of the shelter. The shelter at Foskey's Pavillion operated for three nights, commencing on Tuesday 15 February and closing at 9am on Friday 18 February 2011. During the three days of operation, a total of 424 adults and children were accommodated and supported.

DCF will retain the responsibility to coordinate NTG agencies and NGOs in establishing and managing Homeless Shelters in future severe weather events. The Department is working closely with NGO partners, NT agencies and the Australian Government to ensure the safety of homeless people in future severe weather events.

## Legislative changes

On 31 March 2011, the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Commissioner) Amendment Bill* passed through the Alice Springs Sittings of the Legislative Assembly. The amendments increased the powers and functions of the Children's Commissioner. The legislation, developed in consultation with the Children's Commissioner, commenced on 1 July 2011.

One of the significant legislative reform projects arising out of the Board of Inquiry report, *Growing them strong, together* is an extensive review of the primary child protection legislation, the *Care and Protection of Children Act*. This is a major activity that commenced in 2010-2011 and will continue during 2011-2012.

The Department of Children and Families, with the Department of Justice, is supporting the Review of the *Youth Justice Act*. This Review commenced in May 2011, led by Ms Jodeen Carney. The review will include recommendations regarding Agency arrangements for the delivery of youth justice services.

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## Complaints

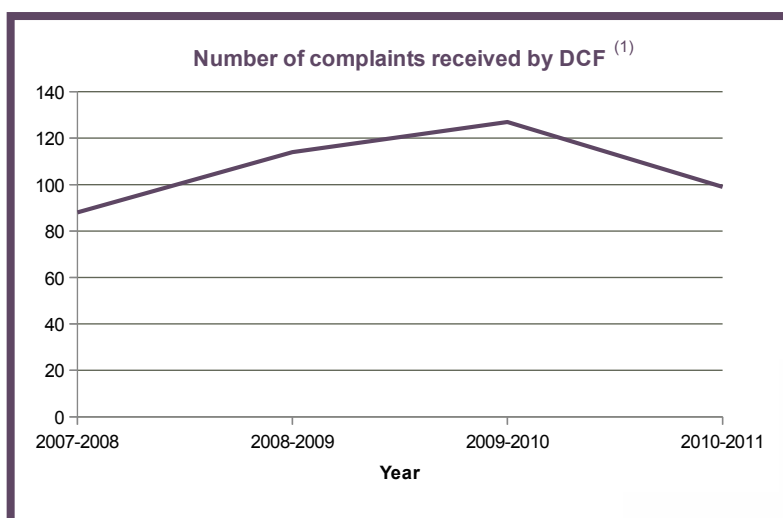
Complaints are a vital source of feedback that allows the Department to gain an understanding of our clients' and key partners' views of their experiences with DCF. They allow the Department to understand what may not be working as well as it could and provide a useful source of information for improving services provided by the Agency.

With the establishment of the new Department on 1 January 2011, complaints continued to be handled under the former Department of Health and Families' Complaints Handling Policy.

Options for a complaint outcome can include:

- offering an apology to the complainant
- developing or amending a policy, procedure and/or training
- conducting a formal review of individual cases
- ongoing monitoring of an issue, and
- convening a case conference or family meeting to discuss concerns.

During 2010-2011, the number of complaints received by the Department of Children and Families (and by NT Families and Children from 1 July to 31 December 2010) was 99, which is a decrease on the previous two years.



(1) Prior to 1 January 2011, complaints were received by NT Families and Children as a Division of the former Department of Health and Families.



# Governance and organisational structure

The most frequent complaint types during 2010-2011 were in relation to responses to case management tasks, referrals, care of a child in out-of-home care and insufficient or inadequate information. The most common

outcome to a complaint was the provision of an explanation, followed by the complainant receiving the service which had been the subject of their complaint (usually linked to a service being unavailable or inadequate).

Complaint type	Per cent of complaints received by type			
	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Poor response to case management tasks	14.6	11.4	10.6	6.4
Referral	13.0	17.7	5.6	9.6
Care of a child in out of home care	13.0	9.1	5.6	3.2
Insufficient or inadequate information	11.4	10.9	10.6	11.7
Relationship conflict	8.1	2.9	4.3	0.0
Requested service not provided	6.5	8.0	11.8	16.0
Inadequate or no service	6.5	1.7	5.6	11.7
Information wrong/misleading	4.1	2.3	5.0	0.0
Providers attitude	4.1	5.1	5.6	5.3
Policy/procedures/standard of practice	3.3	3.4	4.3	1.1
Inadequate/no response to complaint	3.3	6.9	6.8	4.3
Consent not obtained <sup>(1)</sup>	2.4	1.1	2.5	3.2
Failure to consult consumer	2.4	4.0	4.3	8.5
Breach of duty of care	2.4	0.0	2.5	0.0
Processing payments/funding support	1.6	5.7	0.0	0.0
Administrative practices	0.8	0.0	1.2	1.1
Cultural appropriateness	0.8	0.6	0.0	2.1
Competence	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.1
Case management co-ordination	0.8	2.9	0.0	3.2
Other <sup>(2)</sup>	0.0	5.1	12.3	11.8

<sup>(1)</sup> Also includes 'consent not informed/failure to warn'. There were no complaints of this type during 2010-2011.

<sup>(2)</sup> Includes 'assault', 'reprisal/retaliation', 'damage or injury to persons or property', 'communication/information', 'access to records', 'privacy/confidentiality', 'reports', 'case management', accuracy/inadequacy of records', 'illegal practice' and 'security'. There were no complaints of these types during 2010-2011.

Complaint outcome	Per cent of complaints by outcome			
	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Explanation provided	58.6	70.1	46.5	36.4
Service obtained	20.2	8.7	5.3	10.2
Referred elsewhere	7.1	3.1	9.6	1.1
Concern registered	5.1	5.5	16.7	33.0
Account adjusted	3.0	0.8	0.9	0.0
Apology provided	3.0	3.9	4.4	4.5
Conciliation agreement reached	1.0	5.5	7.9	6.8
Change in procedure/practice	1.0	0.0	4.4	1.1
Refund provided	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy change effected	0.0	1.6	0.0	1.1
Complaint withdrawn	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1
Disciplinary action taken	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1
Undefined	0.0	0.8	4.4	3.4

There are high profile levels of complaints arising from coronial inquiries and other reviews, most notably the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory. As previously highlighted, significant activity is underway to address some of the systemic issues in care and protection services that could give rise to complaints from clients and others concerned about the wellbeing of vulnerable children.

The Board of Inquiry recommended that the Department of Children and Families develop an effective complaints management process that provides for the speedy resolution of complaints for clients and others affected by decisions. The Board of Inquiry also recommended that the Department develop an

appeals process that provides for an appeal of professional decisions independent of the normal line management structures. During 2010-2011, work began on developing a framework for establishing a critical incident investigations and practice audit function within the Office of the Chief Executive. A Division will be established during 2011-2012 following internal and external consultation. The Division will be responsible for responding to and investigating specified complaints, critical incidents, abuse in care matters and significant systemic practice issues through the mechanisms of practice audits.

Across the Department there is a considered move to a culture of open disclosure within an active learning organisation.



# Governance and organisational structure

## Coronial findings

There were no coronial findings handed down during 2010-2011 relating to deaths of children and young people under the care and protection of the Department of Children and Families.

Throughout the 2010-2011 financial year, the Department has been actively implementing recommendations arising from two coronial inquiries which were handed down in January 2010.

## Information and privacy

The Information and Privacy Unit is located in the Legal Services Branch of the Department of Health. Under the shared services arrangement, the Unit deals with formal applications for access to information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) provisions of the *Information Act* for both the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Families. It also assists staff of both departments, members of the public and other organisations to access government and personal information in less formal ways. The Unit provides advice on all aspects of privacy protection of personal information held by the two Departments.

Since the creation of the Department of Children and Families on 1 January 2011, three applications for access to government and personal information had been lodged and accepted. Of the three applications made under the provisions of the *Information Act* during the reporting period, none were finalised by 30 June 2011.



### *Toys provide welcome fun for Safe House kids*

Safe Places staff at Nguui on the Tiwi Islands were delighted when they received books and toys for children while they are staying at the Women's Safe House. Nguui Safe House was the first to receive the toys. The toys are being introduced to Safe Houses that are part of the Safe Places program run by the Remote Family Violence Team with support from the Child and Parenting Support Team. Children will have access to fun and educational toys when they are seeking refuge from family violence. The Safe Places staff enjoyed learning about the value of the toys in promoting child development and wellbeing, in providing children with safe outlets for emotional stress and in giving mothers and children fun ways to play and spend time together.

The Department of Children and Families' staff is its greatest asset. Developing a positive and productive work environment is a critical part of creating the new Department.

During 2011-2012, a comprehensive workforce strategy will be developed, and measures will be put in place to support the implementation of this strategy over the next five years.

A number of activities have taken place within the Department to reshape the workforce, improve working conditions, and improve care and protection outcomes for children. These included:

- Recruitment of 56 additional frontline child protection workers
- Introduction of a comprehensive staff incentive package from 6 January 2011, including market, skills retention, location and relocation allowances and a professional learning commitment payment for frontline staff
- Approval of new caseload ratios for child protection workers that reflect the specific demands of working remotely
- Development of a Supervision Framework and implementation of a staff supervision ratio of 1:5
- Consultation with 135 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about cultural practice within the agency at an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum

- Review of all Professional classifications within the Department, in consultation with managers and unions
- Establishment of a recruitment hotline and launch of a dedicated Department of Children and Families careers website in November 2010, and
- Implementation of an 'Open P1/P2 Vacancy', referring to the professional level (P1 or P2) at which child protection workers can be employed, enabling continued advertising for child protection workers to address the ongoing issues of staff recruitment and retention to these front line positions in the Northern Territory.

## ***Mandatory Reporting of Domestic/ Family Violence - Community Education***

DCF continued to lead the implementation of domestic and family violence mandatory reporting, under the unique provisions of the NT's *Domestic and Family Violence Act*. Between July 2010 and June 2011, the Domestic and Family Violence Policy Unit provided 40 information sessions on mandatory reporting across the Northern Territory, involving approximately 1,100 participants from Government and non-Government organisations. Three websites providing information for different target audiences were also maintained.

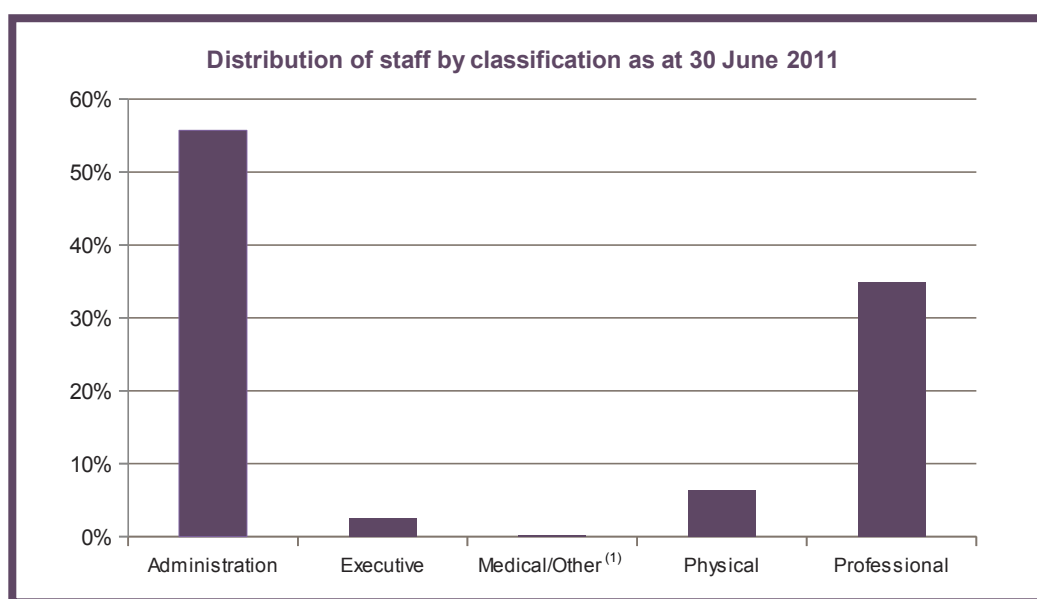
# Our people

## Our workforce

As at 30 June 2011, the Department employed 653 staff members. Ninety two per cent of staff were classified as 'frontline staff', providing direct client contact services. This does not include staff whose role is predominately administration, including management, corporate or policy service

areas. It is not possible to compare changes to the number of employees over time because of the newly established Department.

Fifteen per cent of the DCF workforce is employed part-time, and 11 per cent is employed on a casual basis. Just over half of all employees are employed under the Administration classification.



<sup>(1)</sup> Includes one employee employed in the Medical classification and one employee employed in the Other classification.

## White Ribbon Day 2010

White Ribbon Day on 25 November is the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The campaign is aimed at men, working in partnership with women, to end men's violence against women. Wearing a white ribbon signifies a pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women. In the Northern Territory, the 2010 White Ribbon Day campaign was coordinated by the Office of Women's Policy in partnership with White Ribbon Day Ambassadors and local organisations to hold activities across the Territory. The Office of Women's Policy provided White Ribbon Day banners for display in Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy with activities held in Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

## Reporting against diversity

The Department's workforce is predominantly female, with women comprising just over four out of five (81 per cent) employees. As of 30 June 2011, one per cent of employees reported in the Personal Information and Payroll System (PIPS) that they were from a non-English speaking background, and two per cent reported that they lived with a disability (six and 12 persons respectively).

The PIPS system showed 90 staff as at 30 June 2011 who reported as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or 14 per cent of the workforce. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is likely to be under-reported in the PIPS system, illustrated by attendance of 135 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum for the Department in February 2011.

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group has been established by the Department. It is supported by the Strategic Reform and Accountability Team and is responding to recommendations from the Board of Inquiry report *Growing them strong, together* and from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum. The Advisory Group's aims include supporting the training and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to facilitate the provision of culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The agency-wide workforce strategy being developed in 2011-2012 will include specific initiatives to develop and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

## Occupational Health and Safety

The Department of Children and Families is committed to maintaining a work environment that is safe and minimises risks to the wellbeing of employees, contractors, suppliers, clients and visitors. Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) has been managed by the Department of Health OH&S Unit under the shared corporate services arrangements.

OH&S Awareness training, including Manual Handling, Aggression Minimisation and Emergency Response, forms part of the Department of Health's Orientation Program and is provided on a regular basis throughout the year. A diverse range of awareness programs are also offered on an ad-hoc basis. Staff from DCF have had access to this training under the shared services agreement.

With the enactment of the new model *Workplace Health and Safety Act* and Regulations by 1 January 2012, the Department is taking steps to ensure compliance upon their commencement.





# Our people

## Management training and staff development

Developing and retaining a workforce to meet both short and long term needs is a core necessity for the Department of Children and Families. The Department is committed to building a culture that values investment in professional development and encourages life-long learning.

Training and staff development activities undertaken by the Department's Learning and Development Unit during 2010-2011 included:

- Co-hosting a Child Protection Week breakfast with the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) with attendance of 190 people from across the sector. This provided an opportunity for staff across the child and family welfare sectors to meet, share experiences, and build and enhance relationships across sectors



- 86 days of core training delivered in Darwin and Alice Springs, including:
  - Aboriginal Cultural Practice in Care and Protection
  - Introduction to Child Protection
  - Introduction to Out of Home Care
  - Court and Legal Issues
  - Case Management and Engagement
- 30 days of key developmental training delivered in Darwin and Alice Springs:
  - Understanding and Responding to Young People and Mental Health
  - Child Assessment Interviewing
  - Dual Diagnosis (Drug and Alcohol and concurrent Mental Health Issues)
  - The Strengths Approach
  - Therapeutic Crisis Intervention
  - Working with Children Presenting with Sexualised Behaviours
  - Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Case Management
  - First Aid Training St John
  - Protective Behaviours 2 and 3
  - Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma (SMART) Training
  - Transforming the Care
  - Transforming Care – Train the Trainer
- Supporting 14 staff to commence the Graduate Certificate in Remote Health (Child Protection Practice)
- Supporting 10 staff through the Productivity Places Program (PPP) program to undertake the Diploma in Community Services
- Supporting 10 staff through the PPP program to undertake the Diploma in Child, Youth and Family Intervention



- 135 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff participated in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum
- Sponsoring four places at the Foster Carers Conference, two for carers to attend and two for non-government organisations to send representatives
- Two staff attended the National Therapeutic Residential Workshop
- 40 staff participated in the Berry Street conference
- Roll out of Child Protection Measure Income Management training to all Child Protection offices in conjunction with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and Centrelink, and
- All staff from the Learning and Development Unit successfully completing a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

In 2011-2012, DCF plans to implement a Remote Area Rotation Initiative (RARI). This innovative workforce development strategy will provide interstate child protection staff with the opportunity to work in remote locations while increasing their experience in remote child protection practice. RARI will complement existing workforce development strategies and has the potential to build strong collegial links with counterparts in other jurisdictions.

## Complaints

During 2010-2011, the Department of Children and Families received three formal complaints of bullying and harassment for investigation.

In addition, a total of five incidences of physically aggressive behaviour towards Department staff were reported.

### *2010 Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians – Community-based projects*

The concerns and issues important to young Territorians are reflected in the community-based projects undertaken by members of the Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians. The community-based projects are completed by individuals or sub-groups within the Round Table and are presented to Government Ministers, NT Government Chief Executives and other key government representatives at Parliament House in December, before being released publicly early in the following year via the Office of Youth Affairs website.

Projects undertaken by Round Table members in 2010 were:

- Listen Up & Shout Out: best practice guidelines for engaging young people in decision-making processes in Alice Springs
- Skin Deep: body image, self-esteem and eating disorder services in the Northern Territory
- Hearing Whispered Voices: advocating for change in youth sexual assault services in the Northern Territory
- Youth Station: investigating the feasibility of establishing a Youth Station in Darwin's rural area
- Effective Promotion of Youth Activities in Alice Springs.

# Financial statements

## Foreword

The Department of Children and Families is a Northern Territory Government department under the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*.

The Department is controlled by the Northern Territory which is the ultimate parent.

The financial statements cover the Department of Children and Families and its controlled entities, and have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2009* and with Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

The financial statements have been prepared to provide the following users with information relevant to the Department's financial performance and its financial position:

- Minister for Children and Families
- Minister for Child Protection
- Minister for Women's Policy
- Minister for Young Territorians
- Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory
- Government organisations
- Community organisations
- Community members and clients.

## Certification of the financial statements

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Department of Children and Families have been prepared from proper accounts and records in accordance with the prescribed format, the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions.

We further state that the information set out in the Comprehensive Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement, and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial performance and cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2011 and the financial position on that date.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render the particulars included in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



**Clare Gardiner-Barnes**  
Chief Executive  
31 / 08 / 2011



**Cameron Wilson**  
Chief Finance Officer  
31 / 08 / 2011

# Financial statements

## Department of Children and Families - Comprehensive operating statement for the year ended 30 June 2011

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>INCOME</b>			
Taxation Revenue		0	0
<i>Grants and Subsidies Revenue</i>			
Current		8,492	0
Appropriation			
Output		113,475	0
Commonwealth		16,523	0
Sales of Goods and Services		346	0
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	3,066	0
Other Income		193	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	3	<b>142,095</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employee Expenses		55,219	
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>			0
Purchases of Goods and Services	5	25,749	0
Depreciation and Amortisation	8, 9	405	0
Other Administrative Expenses <sup>(1)</sup>		3,555	0
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>			
Current		61,638	0
Capital		2	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	3	<b>146,568</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		<b>(4,473)</b>	<b>0</b>

The Comprehensive Operating Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes DBE service charges.



# Financial statements

## Department of Children and Families - Balance sheet as at 30 June 2011

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<i><b>Current Assets</b></i>			
Cash and Deposits	6	14,847	0
Receivables	7	147	0
Advances and Investments		0	0
Prepayments		55	0
Other Assets		0	0
<i><b>Total Current Assets</b></i>		<b>15,049</b>	<b>0</b>
<i><b>Non-Current Assets</b></i>			
Receivables	7	0	0
Property, Plant and Equipment	8	3,607	0
Heritage and Cultural Assets	9	5	0
<i><b>Total Non-Current Assets</b></i>		<b>3,611</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>18,661</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<i><b>Current Liabilities</b></i>			
Payables	10	7,058	0
Provisions	12	5,175	0
<i><b>Total Current Liabilities</b></i>		<b>12,233</b>	<b>0</b>
<i><b>Non-Current Liabilities</b></i>			
Provisions	12	1,507	0
<i><b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b></i>		<b>1,507</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>13,740</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>4,921</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Capital		9,394	0
Accumulated Funds		(4,473)	0
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>4,921</b>	<b>0</b>

The Balance Sheet is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

# Financial statements

## Department of Children and Families - Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2011

	NOTE	Equity at 1 July \$'000	Comprehensive result \$'000	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners \$'000	Equity at 30 June \$'000
<b>2010-11</b>					
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>		0	(4,473)	0	(4,473)
		<u>0</u>	<u>(4,473)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(4,473)</u>
<b>Capital - Transactions with Owners</b>		0			0
Equity Injections					
Equity Transfers In		0	0	3,957	3,957
Other Equity Injections				13,710	13,710
Equity Withdrawals					
Capital Withdrawal				(8,272)	(8,272)
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(9,394)</u>	<u>(9,394)</u>
<b>Total Equity at End of Financial Year</b>		<u>0</u>	<u>(4,473)</u>	<u>9,394</u>	<u>4,921</u>

This Statement of Changes in Equity is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements





# Financial statements

## Department of Children and Families - Cash flow statement for the year ended 30 June 2011

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Operating Receipts</i>			
<i>Grants and Subsidies Received</i>			
Current		8,492	0
Appropriation			
Output		113,475	0
Commonwealth		16,523	0
Receipts from Sales of Goods and Services		2,687	0
<b>Total Operating Receipts</b>		<b>141,176</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Operating Payments</i>			
Payments to Employees		47,353	0
Payments for Goods and Services		22,823	0
<i>Grants and Subsidies Paid</i>			
Current		61,528	0
Capital		2	0
<b>Total Operating Payments</b>		<b>131,706</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Operating Activities</b>	12	<b>9,471</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Investing Payments</i>			
Purchases of Assets		61	0
<b>Total Investing Payments</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Investing Activities</b>		<b>-61</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Financing Receipts</i>			
<i>Equity Injections</i>			
Other Equity Injections		13,710	0
<b>Total Financing Receipts</b>		<b>13,710</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Financing Payments</i>			
Equity Withdrawals		8,272	0
<b>Total Financing Payments</b>		<b>8,272</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Financing Activities</b>			
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held		14,847	0
Cash at Beginning of Financial Year		0	0
<b>CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	6	<b>14,847</b>	<b>0</b>

The Cash Flow Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

# Financial statements

## Department of Children and Families - Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2011

### Index of Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Objectives and Funding
2. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies
3. Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group
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4. Goods and Services Received Free of Charge
- EXPENSES**
5. Purchases of Goods and Services
- ASSETS**
6. Cash and Deposits
7. Receivables
8. Property, Plant and Equipment
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- LIABILITIES**
10. Payables
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- OTHER DISCLOSURES**
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13. Financial Instruments
14. Commitments
15. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
16. Events Subsequent to Balance Date
17. Write-offs, Postponements, Waivers, Gifts and Ex-Gratia Payments

# Financial statements

## 1. Objectives and Funding

The Northern Territory Government is continuing to improve services and deliver new initiatives to support families and children across the Northern Territory. The Government's response to the Board of Inquiry report, *Growing them strong, together* provided an additional \$130 million over five years to better protect children at risk of abuse and neglect and improve services to support families and young people.

To further develop and improve these services the Department of Children and Families commenced on 1 January 2011 after separating from the Department of Health and Families. The Department of Children and Families continues to maintain programs and services that support children, youth, individuals and families and is committed to encouraging strength and independence.

The Department of Children and Families is predominantly funded by, and is dependent on the receipt of parliamentary appropriations. The financial statements encompass all funds through which the Agency controls resources to carry on its functions and deliver outputs. For reporting purposes, there is one output delivered by the Agency and that is, Northern Territory Families and Children.

## 2. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

### a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act* and related Treasurer's Directions. The *Financial*

*Management Act* requires the Department of Children and Families to prepare financial statements for the year ended 30 June based on the form determined by the Treasurer. The form of Agency financial statements is to include:

- (i) a Certification of the Financial Statements;
- (ii) a Comprehensive Operating Statement;
- (iii) a Balance Sheet;
- (iv) a Statement of Changes in Equity;
- (v) a Cash Flow Statement; and
- (vi) applicable explanatory notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared using the accrual basis of accounting, which recognises the effect of financial transactions and events when they occur, rather than when cash is paid out or received. As part of the preparation of the financial statements, all intra-agency transactions and balances have been eliminated.

Except where stated, the financial statements have also been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

The form of the Agency financial statements is also consistent with the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards. The effects of all relevant new and revised Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are effective for the current annual reporting period have been evaluated. The Standards and Interpretations and their impacts are:

*AASB 2009-5 Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 5, 8, 101, 107, 117, 118, 136 & 139]*

# Financial statements

A number of amendments are largely technical, clarifying particular terms or eliminating unintended consequences. Other changes include current/non-current classification of convertible instruments, the classification of expenditure on unrecognised assets in the cash flow statement and the classification of leases of land and buildings. The Standard does not impact the Financial Statements.

*AASB 2010-3 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 3, 7, 121, 128, 131, 132 & 139]*

The amending Standard clarifies certain matters, including the measurement of non-controlling interests in a business combination, transition requirements for contingent consideration from a business combination and transition requirements for amendments arising as a result of AASB 127 Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements. The Standard does not impact the Financial Statements.

## b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations Issued but not yet effective

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, the Standards and Interpretations listed below were in issue but not yet effective.



# Financial statements

Standard/Interpretation	Summary	Effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after	Impact on financial statements
AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures (Dec 2009)	Government-related entities are granted partial exemption from related party disclosure requirements	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2009-12 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [AASB 5, 8, 108, 110, 112, 119, 133, 137, 139, 1023 & 1031 and Interpretations 2, 4, 16, 1039 & 1052]	Amends AASB 8 <i>Operating Segments</i> to require an entity to exercise judgement in assessing whether a government and entities known to be under the control of that government are considered a single customer for purposes of certain operating segment disclosures. This Standard also makes numerous editorial amendments to other Standards.	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2010-4 Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 1, 7, 101 & 134 and Interpretation 13]	Key amendments include clarification of content of statement of changes in equity (AASB 101) and financial instrument disclosures (AASB 7)	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2010-5 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [AASB 1, 3, 4, 5, 101, 107, 112, 118, 119, 121, 132, 133, 134, 137, 139, 140, 1023 & 1038 and Interpretations 112, 115, 127, 132 & 1042]	Makes numerous editorial amendments to a range of Standards and Interpretations	1 Jan 2011	
Interpretation 4 Determining whether an Arrangement contains a Lease	Provides guidance on identifying lease arrangements	1 Jan 2011	



# Financial statements

Standard/Interpretation	Summary	Effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after	Impact on financial statements
Interpretation 14 AASB 119 – The Limit on a Defined Benefit Asset, Minimum Funding Requirements and their Interaction, AASB 2009-14 Amendments to Australian Interpretation – Prepayments of a Minimum Funding Requirement	Clarifies when refunds or reductions in future contributions should be regarded as available, particularly when a minimum funding requirement exists	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2010-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosures on Transfers of Financial Assets	Amends AASB 7 <i>Financial Instruments: Disclosures</i> , introducing additional disclosures designed to allow users of financial statements to improve their understanding of transfer transactions of financial assets	1 July 2011	
AASB 9 Financial instruments, AASB 2009-11 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9, AASB 2010-7 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (Dec 2010)	AASB 9 simplifies requirements for the classification and measurement of financial assets and liabilities resulting from Phase 1 of the IASB's project to replace IAS 39 <i>Financial instruments: recognition and measurement</i> (AASB 139 <i>Financial Instruments: recognition and measurement</i> ).	1 Jan 2013	
Interpretation 12 Service Concession Arrangements	Provides guidance on the accounting by operators for public-to-private service concession arrangements	1 Jan 2013	

# Financial statements

## c) Agency and Territory Items

The financial statements of the Department of Children and Families include income, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity over which the Department of Children and Families has control (Agency items).

As at 30 June 2011 the Department of Children and Families did not manage any items that are controlled and recorded by the Territory (Territory items).

## d) Comparatives

The Department of Children and Families was created on 1 January 2011 as part of an administrative arrangements order with retrospective effect for accounting purposes from 1 July 2010. The Department of Children and Families retains all of the functions of the Northern Territory Families and Children – a former division of the Department of Health and Families.

As it is not practicable to reconstruct individual balances from the Operating Statement and Balance Sheet before 1 July 2010, no comparisons have been provided pursuant to Clause 42 of the Accounting standards AASB101.

## e) Presentation and Rounding of Amounts

Amounts in the financial statements and notes to the financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars, with amounts of \$500 or less being rounded down to zero.

## f) Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2010-11 as a result of management decisions.

## g) Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial report requires the making of judgements and estimates that affect the recognised amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses and the disclosure of contingent liabilities. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis for making judgements about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgements and estimates that have significant effects on the financial statements are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements. Notes that include significant judgements and estimates are:

- Employee Benefits – Note 2(s) and Note 11: Non-current liabilities in respect of employee benefits are measured as the present value of estimated future cash outflows based on the appropriate Government bond rate, estimates of future salary and wage levels and employee periods of service.

# Financial statements

- Contingent Liabilities – Note 15:  
The present value of material quantifiable contingent liabilities are calculated using a discount rate based on the published 10-year Government bond rate.
- Allowance for Impairment Losses – Note 2(p), 7: Receivables & 13: Financial Instruments.
- Depreciation and Amortisation – Note 2(k), Note 8: Property, Plant and Equipment and Note 9: Heritage and Cultural Assets.

## h) Goods and Services Tax

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred on a purchase of goods and services is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as part of receivables or payables in the Balance Sheet.

Cash flows are included in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows. Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable or payable unless otherwise specified.

## i) Income Recognition

Income encompasses both revenue and gains. Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, exclusive of the amount of goods and services tax (GST). Exchanges of goods or services of the same nature and value without any cash consideration being exchanged are not recognised as income.

### *Grants and Other Contributions*

Grants, donations, gifts and other non-reciprocal contributions are recognised as revenue when the Agency obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions. Control is normally obtained upon receipt. Contributions are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would be purchased if not donated.

### *Appropriation*

Output Appropriation is the operating payment to each Agency for the outputs they provide and is calculated as the net cost of Agency outputs after taking into account funding from Agency income. It does not include any allowance for major non-cash costs such as depreciation.

Commonwealth appropriation follows from the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations*, resulting in Special Purpose Payments and National Partnership payments being made by the Commonwealth Treasury to state treasuries, in a manner similar to arrangements for GST payments. These payments are received by Treasury on behalf of the Central Holding Authority and then onpassed to the relevant agencies as Commonwealth Appropriation.

# Financial statements

Revenue in respect of Appropriations is recognised in the period in which the Agency gains control of the funds.

## *Sale of Goods*

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised (net of returns, discounts and allowances) when:

- the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer
- the Agency retains neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the goods sold
- the amount of revenue can be reliably measured
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Agency, and
- the costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably.

## *Rendering of Services*

Revenue from rendering services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured, and
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

## *Interest Revenue*

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues, taking into account the effective yield on the financial asset.

## *Goods and Services Received Free of Charge*

Goods and services received free of charge are recognised as revenue when a fair value can be reliably determined and the resource would have been purchased if it had not been donated. Use of the resource is recognised as an expense.

## *Disposal of Assets*

A gain or loss on disposal of assets is included as a gain or loss on the date control of the asset passes to the buyer, usually when an unconditional contract of sale is signed. The gain or loss on disposal is calculated as the difference between the carrying amount of the asset at the time of disposal and the net proceeds on disposal.

## *Contributions of Assets*

Contributions of assets and contributions to assist in the acquisition of assets, being non-reciprocal transfers, are recognised, unless otherwise determined by Government, as gains when the Agency obtains control of the asset or contribution. Contributions are recognised at the fair value received or receivable.

## *j) Repairs and Maintenance Expense*

Funding is received for repairs and maintenance works associated with Agency assets as part of Output Revenue. Costs associated with repairs and maintenance works on Agency assets are expensed as incurred.

# Financial statements

## k) Depreciation and Amortisation Expense

Items of property, plant and equipment, including buildings but excluding land, have limited useful lives and are depreciated or amortised using the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives.

Amortisation applies in relation to intangible non-current assets with limited useful lives and is calculated and accounted for in a similar manner to depreciation.

The estimated useful lives for each class of asset are in accordance with the Treasurer's Directions and are determined as follows:

	2011
Buildings	50 Years
Infrastructure Assets	25 Years
Plant and Equipment	4 to 15 Years
Leased Plant and Equipment	4 Years
Heritage and Cultural Assets	5 Years

Assets are depreciated or amortised from the date of acquisition or from the time an asset is completed and held ready for use.

## l) Interest Expense

Interest expenses include interest and finance lease charges. Interest expenses are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

## m) Cash and Deposits

For the purposes of the Balance Sheet and the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash equivalents. Cash equivalents are highly liquid short-term investments that are readily convertible to cash.

## n) Receivables

Receivables include accounts receivable and other receivables and are recognised at fair value less any allowance for impairment losses.

The allowance for impairment losses represents the amount of receivables the Agency estimates are not likely to be collected and are considered doubtful. Analysis of the age of the receivables that are past due as at the reporting date are disclosed in an ageing schedule under credit risk in Note 18 Financial Instruments. Reconciliation of changes in the allowance accounts is also presented.

Accounts receivable are generally settled within 30 days and other receivables within 30 days.





# Financial statements

## o) Property, Plant and Equipment

### *Acquisitions*

All items of property, plant and equipment with a cost, or other value, equal to or greater than \$10,000 are recognised in the year of acquisition and depreciated as outlined below. Items of property, plant and equipment below the \$10,000 threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition.

The construction cost of property, plant and equipment includes the cost of materials and direct labour, and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

### *Complex Assets*

Major items of plant and equipment comprising a number of components that have different useful lives, are accounted for as separate assets. The components may be replaced during the useful life of the complex asset.

### *Subsequent Additional Costs*

Costs incurred on property, plant and equipment subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits in excess of the originally assessed performance of the asset will flow to the Agency in future years. Where these costs represent separate components of a complex asset, they are accounted for as separate assets and are separately depreciated over their expected useful lives.

### *Construction (Work in Progress)*

As part of the financial management framework, the Department of Construction and Infrastructure is responsible for managing general government capital works projects on a whole of Government basis. Therefore appropriation for all Agency capital works is provided directly to the Department of

Construction and Infrastructure and the cost of construction work in progress is recognised as an asset of that Department. Once completed, capital works assets are transferred to the Agency.

## p) Revaluations and Impairment

### *Revaluation of Assets*

Subsequent to initial recognition, assets belonging to the following classes of non-current assets are revalued with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount of these assets does not differ materially from their fair value at reporting date:

- Land
- Buildings
- Infrastructure Assets
- Heritage and Cultural Assets
- Biological Assets, and
- Intangibles.

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged, or liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arms' length transaction.

Plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less depreciation, which is deemed to equate to fair value.

The unique nature of some of the heritage and cultural assets may preclude reliable measurement. Such assets have not been recognised in the financial statements.

### *Impairment of Assets*

An asset is said to be impaired when the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount.

Non-current physical and intangible Agency assets are assessed for indicators of

# Financial statements

impairment on an annual basis. If an indicator of impairment exists, the Agency determines the asset's recoverable amount. The asset's recoverable amount is determined as the higher of the asset's depreciated replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Impairment losses are recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement. They are disclosed as an expense unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount. Where the asset is measured at a revalued amount, the impairment loss is offset against the Asset Revaluation Surplus for that class of asset to the extent that an available balance exists in the Asset Revaluation Surplus.

In certain situations, an impairment loss may subsequently be reversed. Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment reversal results in an increase in the Asset Revaluation Surplus.

## q) Leased Assets

Leases under which the Agency assumes substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset are classified as finance leases. Other leases are classified as operating leases.

### *Finance Leases*

Finance leases are capitalised. A leased asset and a lease liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments are recognised at the inception of the lease. Lease payments are allocated between the

principal component of the lease liability and the interest expense.

### *Operating Leases*

Operating lease payments made at regular intervals throughout the term are expensed when the payments are due, except where an alternative basis is more representative of the pattern of benefits to be derived from the leased property. Lease incentives under an operating lease of a building or office space is recognised as an integral part of the consideration for the use of the leased asset. Lease incentives are to be recognised as a deduction of the lease expenses over the term of the lease.

## r) Payables

Liabilities for accounts payable and other amounts payable are carried at cost which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the Agency. Accounts payable are normally settled within 30 days.

## s) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for employee benefits accumulated as a result of employees rendering services up to the reporting date. These benefits include wages and salaries and recreation leave. Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries and recreation leave and other employee benefit liabilities that fall due within twelve months of reporting date are classified as current liabilities and are measured at amounts expected to be paid. Non-current employee benefit liabilities that fall due after twelve months of the reporting date are measured at present value, calculated using the Government long term bond rate.

# Financial statements

No provision is made for sick leave, which is non-vesting, as the anticipated pattern of future sick leave to be taken is less than the entitlement accruing in each reporting period.

Employee benefit expenses are recognised on a net basis in respect of the following categories:

- wages and salaries, non-monetary benefits, recreation leave, sick leave and other leave entitlements, and
- other types of employee benefits.

As part of the financial management framework, the Central Holding Authority assumes the long service leave liabilities of Government Agencies, including the Department of Children and Families and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in Agency financial statements.

## t) Superannuation

Employees' superannuation entitlements are provided through the:

- NT Government and Public Authorities Superannuation Scheme (NTGPASS)
- Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), or
- non-government employee nominated schemes for those employees commencing on or after 10 August 1999.

The Agency makes superannuation contributions on behalf of its employees to the Central Holding Authority or non-government employee nominated schemes. Superannuation liabilities related to government superannuation schemes are held by the Central Holding Authority and as such are not recognised in Agency financial statements.

## u) Contributions by and Distributions to Government

The Agency may receive contributions from Government where the Government is acting as owner of the Agency. Conversely, the Agency may make distributions to Government. In accordance with the Financial Management Act and Treasurer's Directions, certain types of contributions and distributions, including those relating to administrative restructures, have been designated as contributions by, and distributions to, Government. These designated contributions and distributions are treated by the Agency as adjustments to equity.

The Statement of Changes in Equity provides additional information in relation to contributions by, and distributions to, Government.

## v) Commitments

Disclosures in relation to capital and other commitments, including lease commitments are shown at note 14 and are consistent with the requirements contained in AASB 101, AASB 116 and AASB 117.

Commitments are those contracted as at 30 June where the amount of the future commitment can be reliably measured.

# Financial statements

## 3. Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group

	Note	NT Families and Children 2011 \$'000	Total 2010 \$'000	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>INCOME</b>					
<i>Grants and Subsidies Revenue</i>					
Current		8,492	0	8,492	0
<i>Appropriation</i>					
Output		113,475	0	113,475	0
Commonwealth		16,523	0	16,523	0
Sales of Goods and Services		346	0	346	0
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	3,066	0	3,066	0
Other Income		193	0	193	0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>142,095</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>142,095</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Employee Expenses		55,219	0	55,219	0
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>					
Purchases of Goods and Services	6	25,748	0	25,748	0
Repairs and Maintenance		1	0	1	0
Depreciation and Amortisation	10, 11	405	0	405	0
Other Administrative Expenses <sup>(1)</sup>		3,555	0	3,555	0
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>					
Current		61,638	0	61,638	0
Capital		2	0	2	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>146,568</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>146,568</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		<b>(4,473)</b>		<b>(4,473)</b>	

This Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes DBE service charges.

## 4. Goods and Services Received Free of Charge

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Corporate and Information Services	3,066	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,066</b>	<b>0</b>

# Financial statements

## 5. Purchases of Goods and Services

The net surplus/(deficit) has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:	
<b>Goods and Services Expenses:</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Accommodation	745
Advertising <sup>(1)</sup>	41
Agent Service Arrangements <sup>(2)</sup>	6,432
Audit Fees	48
Bank Charges	12
Client Travel	101
Clothing	3
Communications	889
Consultants <sup>(3)</sup>	665
Consumables / General Expenses	350
Document Production	159
Entertainment / Hospitality	100
Food	42
Freight	33
General property management	1,418
Insurance Premiums	45
IT charges	2,044
IT Consultants	43
IT Hardware & Software	467
Legal Expenses <sup>(4)</sup>	48
Library Services	4
Marketing and Promotion <sup>(5)</sup>	1,258
Medical / Dental Supply & Service	204
Membership & Subscriptions	42
Motor Vehicle Expenses	2,433
Office Requisites & Stationery	368
Official Duty Fares	1,774
Other Equipment Expenses	1,439
Power	350
Property Maintenance	583
Recruitment <sup>(6)</sup>	1,973
Reg/Advisory Boards/committees	97
Relocation Exp	63
Training and Study	888
Transport Equipment expenses	2
Travelling Allowance	502
Unallocated Corporate Credit card	28
Water & Sewerage	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,749</b>

(1) Does not include recruitment advertising or marketing and promotion advertising.

(2) Includes a range of corporate services provided by the Department of Health through a shared corporate service arrangement.

(3) Includes marketing promotion and IT consultants.

(4) Includes legal fees claim and settlement costs.

(5) Includes advertising for marketing and promotion but excludes marketing and promotion consultants' expenses which are incorporated in the consultants' category.

(6) Includes recruitment related advertising costs.



# Financial statements

## 6. Cash and Deposits

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Cash on Hand	3	0
Cash at Bank	14,844	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,847</b>	<b>0</b>

## 7. Receivables

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts Receivable	8	0
Less: Allowance for Impairment Losses	(3)	(0)
GST Receivables	141	0
Other Receivables	1	0
<b>Total Receivables</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>0</b>



# Financial statements

## 8. Property, Plant and Equipment

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Land</b>		
At Fair Value	400	0
	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Buildings</b>		
At Fair Value	3,819	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(1,457)	(0)
	<b>2,362</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Computer Software</b>		
At Cost	29	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(29)	(0)
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Construction (Work in Progress)</b>		
At Capitalised Cost	10	0
Transferred to Assets	(10)	(0)
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Plant and Equipment</b>		
At Fair Value	1,112	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(276)	(0)
	<b>836</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transport Equipment</b>		
At Fair Value	33	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(24)	(0)
	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Property, Plant and Equipment</b>	<b>3,607</b>	<b>0</b>

### Property, Plant and Equipment Valuations

The Department of Children and Families has not conducted any Valuations of its Assets. The values represented above are based on any valuations conducted by the Department of Health in the 2010-2011 financial year.

The fair value of assets was determined based on any existing restrictions on asset use. Where reliable market values were not available, the fair value of these assets was based on their depreciated replacement cost.

### Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment by the Department of Health as at 30 June 2011. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

# Financial statements

## 2011 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2010-11 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant & Equipment	Computer Software	Transport Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2010</b>							
				61			61
Additions							
Disposals							
Depreciation		(290)		(100)	(9)	(7)	(405)
Additions/(Disposals) from Administrative Restructuring							
Additions/(Disposals) from Asset Transfers	400	2,652	10	875	9	15	3,960
Revaluation Increments/(Decrements)							
Other Movements			(10)				(10)
<b>Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2011</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2,362</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3,607</b>

## 9. Heritage and Culture Assets

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Carrying amount</b>		
At valuation	5	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	0	(0)
Written down value – 30 June		
<b>Reconciliation of movements</b>		
Carrying amount at 1 July	0	0
Additions/(Disposals) from Asset Transfers	5	0
Carrying Amount as at 30 June	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

## Heritage and Cultural Assets Valuation

The Department of Children and Families has one cultural asset, which was capitalised at cost upon purchase in December 2006. The asset was transferred from the Department of Health.

# Financial statements

## 10. Payables

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
Accounts Payable	2,582	0
Accrued Expenses	4,476	0
<b>Total Payables</b>	<b>7,058</b>	<b>0</b>

## 11. Provisions

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Current</b>		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	3,743	0
Leave Loading	604	0
Other Employee Benefits	14	0
<i>Other Current Provisions</i>		
Other Provisions	814	0
	<b>5,175</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Non-Current</b>		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	1,507	0
	<b>1,507</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Provisions</b>	<b>6,682</b>	<b>0</b>

The Department of Children and Families had 590 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff as at 30 June 2011.

# Financial statements

## 12. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Reconciliation of Cash</b>		
The total of Agency Cash and Deposits of \$14,847,000 recorded in the Balance Sheet is consistent with that recorded as 'cash' in the Cash Flow Statement.		
<b>Reconciliation of Net Surplus/(Deficit) to Net Cash From Operating Activities</b>		
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(4,473)</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Non-Cash Items:</i>		
Depreciation and Amortisation	405	0
R&M – minor new work Non cash	1	0
<i>Changes in Assets and Liabilities:</i>		
Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	(147)	0
Decrease/(Increase) in Inventories		
Decrease/(Increase) in Prepayments	(55)	0
Decrease/(Increase) in Other Assets		
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	7,058	0
(Decrease)/Increase in Provision for Employee Benefits	5,868	0
(Decrease)/Increase in Other Provisions	814	0
(Decrease)/Increase in Other Liabilities		
<b>Net Cash From Operating Activities</b>	<b>9,471</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities</b>		
<b>Transfer in of Non-Cash Assets</b>		
During the financial year the Agency received a Work In Progress transfer from the Department of Construction and Infrastructure to the fair value of \$10,000.		



# Financial statements

## 13. Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial instruments held by the Department of Children and Families include cash and deposits, receivables and payables. The Department of Children and Families has limited exposure to financial risks as noted below.

### (a) Categorisation of Financial Instruments

The carrying amounts of the Department of Children and Families financial assets and liabilities by category are disclosed in the table below.

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
Cash and deposits	14,487	0
Loans and receivables	147	0
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		
Fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL):		
Designated as at FVTPL	7,058	0



# Financial statements

## (b) Credit Risk

The Agency has limited credit risk exposure (risk of default). In respect of any dealings with organisations external to Government, the Agency has adopted a policy of only dealing with credit worthy organisations and obtaining sufficient collateral or other security where appropriate, as a means of mitigating the risk of financial loss from defaults.

The carrying amount of financial assets recorded in the financial statements, net of

any allowances for losses, represents the Agency's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral or other security obtained.

### Receivables

Receivable balances are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that exposure to bad debts is not significant. A reconciliation and aging analysis of receivables is presented below.

	Aging of Receivables	Aging of Impaired Receivables	Net Receivables
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>2010-11</b>			
Not Overdue	145		145
Overdue for less than 30 Days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 Days	4		4
Overdue for more than 60 Days		2	(2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses</b>			
Opening	0		
Written off during the year	0		
Recovered during the year	0		
Increase/(decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>		

# Financial statements

## (c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Agency will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The Agency's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure that it will always have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they fall due.

The following table details the Agency's remaining contractual maturity for its financial assets and liabilities. It should be noted that these values are undiscounted, and consequently totals may not reconcile to the carrying amounts presented in the Balance Sheet.

## (d) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. It comprises interest rate risk, price risk and currency risk.

## i) Interest Rate Risk

The Department of Children and Families is not exposed to interest rate risk as the Agency financial assets and financial liabilities are non-interest bearing.

## ii) Price Risk

The Department of Children and Families is not exposed to price risk as the Agency does not hold units in unit trusts.

## iii) Currency Risk

The Department of Children and Families is not exposed to currency risk as the Agency does not hold borrowings denominated in foreign currencies or transactional currency exposures arising from purchases in a foreign currency.

## Maturity analysis for financial assets & liabilities

	Interest Bearing				Non Interest Bearing \$'000	Total \$'000	Weighted Average %
	Fixed or Variable	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000			
<b>Assets</b>							
Cash and deposits					14,847	14,847	
Receivables					147	147	
<b>Total Financial Assets:</b>					<b>14,944</b>	<b>14,994</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>							
Payables					7,058	7,058	
<b>Total Financial Liabilities:</b>					<b>7,058</b>	<b>7,058</b>	

# Financial statements

## (e) Net Fair Value

The fair value of financial instruments is estimated using various methods. These methods are classified into the following levels:

Level 1 – derived from quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

Level 2 – derived from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable directly or indirectly.

Level 3 – derived from inputs not based on observable market data.

2011	Total Carrying Amount \$'000	Net Fair Value Level 1 \$'000	Net Fair Value Level 2 \$'000	Net Fair Value Level 3 \$'000	Net Fair Value Total \$'000
<b>Financial Assets</b>					
Cash and Deposits	14,847	14,847			14,847
Receivables	147	147			147
<b>Total Financial Assets:</b>	<b>14,994</b>	<b>14,994</b>			<b>14,994</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>					
Payables	7,058	7,058			7,058
<b>Total Financial Liabilities:</b>	<b>7,058</b>	<b>7,058</b>			<b>7,058</b>



# Financial statements

## 14. Commitments

	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
<b>(i) Capital Expenditure Commitments</b>		
Capital expenditure commitments primarily related to the construction of buildings. Capital expenditure commitments contracted for at balance date but not recognised as liabilities are payable as follows:		
Within one year	800	0
Later than one year and not later than five years	0	0
Later than five years	0	0
	<b>800</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(ii) Other Expenditure Commitments</b>		
Other non-cancellable expenditure commitments not recognised as liabilities are payable as follows:		
Within one year	15,991	0
Later than one year and not later than five years	4,355	0
Later than five years	0	0
	<b>20,346</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(iii) Operating Lease Commitments</b>		
The Agency leases property under non-cancellable operating leases expiring from 3 to 5 years. Leases generally provide the Agency with a right of renewal at which time all lease terms are renegotiated. The Agency also leases items of plant and equipment under non-cancellable operating leases. Future operating lease commitments not recognised as liabilities are payable as follows:		
Within one year	124	0
Later than one year and not later than five years	140	0
Later than five years	0	0
	<b>264</b>	<b>0</b>



# Financial statements

## 15. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

The Department of Children and Families had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2011 or 30 June 2010.

## 16. Events Subsequent to Balance Date

No events have arisen between the end of the financial year and the date of this report that require adjustment to, or disclosure in, these financial statements.

## 17. Write-offs, Postponements, Waivers, Gifts and Ex-Gratia Payments

	2011 \$'000	No. of Trans.
<b>Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers Under the <i>Financial Management Act</i></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Represented by:		
<u>Amounts written off, postponed and waived by Delegates</u>		
Irrecoverable amounts payable to the Territory or an Agency written off	3	5
Losses or deficiencies of money written off	0	0
Public property written off	0	0
Waiver or postponement of right to receive or recover money or property	0	0
<b>Total written off, postponed and waived by Delegates</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<u>Amounts written off, postponed and waived by the Treasurer</u>		
Irrecoverable amounts payable to the Territory or an Agency written off	0	0
Losses or deficiencies of money written off	0	0
Public property written off	0	0
Waiver or postponement of right to receive or recover money or property	0	0
<b>Total written off, postponed and waived by the Treasurer</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers Authorised Under Other Legislation</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Gifts Under the <i>Financial Management Act</i></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Ex Gratia Payments Under the <i>Financial Management Act</i></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



# Grant funding

During 2010-2011 a total of \$38 million was paid in grant funding to external service providers for the delivery of approved services, programs and activities. Grant funding was made for the following categories of services:

DCF GRANT FUNDING BY FUNDING GROUP	TOTAL 2010-2011 EXPENDITURE (\$)
Care and Protection Grants	\$7,040,498
Youth Grants	\$5,953,418
Homelessness (SAAP/NAHA) Grants	\$12,006,846
Family Support and Crisis Support Grants	\$4,651,157
Mandatory Reporting of Domestic Violence Grants	\$5,241,912
Safe House Grants	\$300,000
Other Grants <sup>(1)</sup>	\$2,501,061
Office of Women's Policy Small Grants	\$23,000
Youth Engagement Small Grants	\$253,393
<b>TOTAL GRANTS PAID<sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>\$38,001,285</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes payments for community violence programs, sector development and business projects.

<sup>(2)</sup> Total grants paid is a subset of the Grants and Subsidies payments reported in the financial statements.



# Grant funding

Grants funding was paid to 70 non-government organisations, including local Governments, during 2010-2011 to provide a range of recurrent and one-off services. Most of these providers (56) were Northern Territory providers. Ten of the remaining interstate providers had locally-based management teams to support service delivery. Small grant and sponsorship funding was also provided to 128 individuals or groups.

Agencies that received grant funding from DCF during 2010-2011 for delivery of services is shown in the following list. Where the organisation is an interstate provider, this is shown, alongside whether management support is provided within the Northern Territory or interstate.

- Aboriginal Resource & Development Services Inc.
- Akeyulerre Inc
- Alice Springs Women's Shelter Incorporated
- Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services Inc
- AMSANT Incorporated
- Balunu Foundation Limited
- Barkly Shire Council
- Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
- Belyuen Community Government Council
- Brahminy Group Pty Ltd
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Incorporated
- Charles Darwin University
- Children's Services Support Program (Central Australia) Inc
- City of Palmerston
- Council For Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services Inc. (CAAPS)
- Crisis Accommodation Gove (Inc.)
- Danila Dilba Health Service Aboriginal Corporation
- Darwin Aboriginal & Islander Women's Shelter Inc.
- Darwin City Council
- Darwin Family Day Care Inc T/A Territory Childcare Group Inc
- Darwin Toy Library Inc
- Dawn House Inc.
- Djabulukgu Association Inc
- East Arnhem Shire Council
- Foster Care NT Incorporated
- Gap Youth Centre Aboriginal Corporation
- Groote Eylandt & Milyakburra Youth Development Unit Inc
- Human Services Training Advisory Council Inc
- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
- Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association Inc
- MacDonnell Shire Council
- Melaleuca Refugee Centre Torture & Trauma Survivors Service
- Menzies School of Health Research

# Grant funding

- Nauiyu Nambiyu Incorporated
- Nhulunbuy Community Toy Library
- Northern Territory Christian Schools Association
- Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS)
- Northern Territory Shelter Incorporated
- Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantatjarra Yankunytjatjara Womens Council
- Relationships Australia NT Inc
- Roper Gulf Shire Council
- Ruby Gaea House Darwin Centre Against Rape
- Somerville Community Services Inc. - Darwin
- Tangentyere Council Incorporated
- Tennant Creek Women's Refuge Incorporated
- The Gathering Incorporated
- The Katherine Women's Crisis Centre Inc
- Tiwi Islands Shire Council
- Vietnam Veterans Association Of Australia NT Branch
- Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation
- West Arnhem Shire Council
- Wurli Wurlingjang Aboriginal Corporation Inc
- YMCA of Katherine
- Yuendumu Women's Centre Aboriginal Corporation
- YWCA of Darwin Incorporated
- Adults Surviving Childhood Abuse (interstate provider and management)
- Anglicare NT (interstate provider with NT management)
- Australian Red Cross Society NT (interstate provider with NT management)
- CatholicCare NT (interstate provider with NT management)
- Create Foundation Ltd (interstate provider with NT management)
- Life Without Barriers (interstate provider with NT management)
- Lifestyle Solutions (Aust) Ltd (interstate provider with NT management)
- Mission Australia (interstate provider with NT management)
- NAPCAN Australia (interstate provider with NT management)
- St Vincent de Paul Society (interstate provider with NT management)
- The Salvation Army (NT) Property Trust (interstate provider with NT management)
- Boystown (interstate provider and management)
- Children's Services Support Unit WA INC (interstate provider and management)
- Crisis Line Inc (T/A Lifeline Top End) (interstate provider and management)



# Appendices

Appendix 1: Legislation administered by our Department

Appendix 2: Committee and Council membership

Appendix 3: Representation on Committees

Appendix 4: Board of Inquiry priority recommendations for annual reporting

Appendix 5: Department of Children and Families Organisation Structure (announced August 2011)

## Appendix 1: Legislation administered by our Department

- *Adoption of Children Act*
- *Adoption of Children Regulations*
- *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*
- *Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangements) Regulations*
- *Care and Protection of Children (Screening) Regulations*
- *Family Law (Child Protection Convention) Regulations*
- *Infants Guardianship Act*
- *Youth Justice Act*
- *Youth Justice Regulations*

## Appendix 2: Committee and Council Membership

### Ministerial Groups

#### *Northern Territory Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee*

Members as at 30 June 2011:

Chairperson: Professor Graham Vimpani

Members: Dr Sven Silburn, Mr Terry Murphy, Mr Frank Hytten, Ms Teresa Neihus, Ms Jacqui Reed

Secretariat: Samantha Ping-Nam

#### *Northern Territory Family and Children Advisory Council*

Members as at 30 June 2011:

Chairperson: Ms Liza Balmer

Members: Ms Shirleen Alum, Ms Lisa Bennett, Ms Regina Bennett, Ms Tracey Brand, Ms Nareen Carter, Ms Lava Kohaupt, Ms Jane Lloyd, Dr Louise Martin, Dr Michael Myers, Ms Deborah Noll, Ms Marilyn Roberts, Ms Jenni Schryver, Mr John Smulders, Dr Geoff Stewart

Secretariat: Jahla McIntosh-Love

# Appendices

## ***Youth Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians***

Appointments to the Youth Round Table are based on the calendar year.

### ***Members 1 January 2010 – 31 December 2011:***

Chairperson: Laureen Moss

Members: Elspeth Blunt, Rebecca Rowberry, Celeste Brand, Gavin Henderson, Aroha Jennings, Eun Ju Kim-Baker, Aaron Dowling, Skye Clayton, Joshua May, Sephyr Crook, Dimity Jessup, Kelvia Johnson, Hannah Woerle, Kylie-Marie Sambo, Amelie Kunnoth-Monks

### ***Members as at 30 June 2011:***

Chairperson: Dion Dodd

Members: Gavin Henderson, Steven Satour, Alpha Capaque, Liana Georges, Connor Reid, Hannah Woerle, Lauren Moss, Zoe Owens, Bruno Wilson, Tobi Martins, Emily Osborne, Samuel McIver, Tylee Wirth

Secretariat: Ngaree Ah Kit

## ***Youth Justice Advisory Committee***

### ***Members as at 30 June 2011:***

Chairperson: Mr Stewart Willey

Members: Ms Antionette Mary, Superintendent Michael White, Mr Eddie Fabijan, Mr Peter Curwen-Walker, Ms Helena Blundell, Superintendent Sean Parnell, Ms Sandra Graham, Ms Barbara Kelly, Mr Keith Williams

Secretariat: Deborah Moore

## ***Screening Authority (Working With Children Clearances)***

### ***Members as at 30 June 2011:***

Chairperson: Garry Lambert

Members: Audrey Ko, Kelvin Curry

Secretariat: Donna Quong (Safe NT)

## ***Departmental Groups***

### ***Department of Children and Families Executive Leadership Group***

### ***Members as at 30 June 2011:***

Chairperson: Clare Gardiner-Barnes

Members: Jullie Johnson, Fiona Lynch, Helen Nezeritis, Fran O'Toole, Pippa Rudd, Bronwyn Thompson, Jo Townsend, Lorraine Williams

Secretariat: Kate Worden

### ***Department of Children and Families Audit and Risk Management Committee***

### ***Members as at 30 June 2011:***

Chairperson: Jullie Johnson

Members: Fiona Lynch, Helen Nezeritis, Bronwyn Thompson, Lorraine Williams, Cameron Wilson

Secretariat: Glenn Bernardin

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## *Department of Children and Families Finance Committee*

Members as at 30 June 2011:

Chairperson: Helen Nezeritis

Members: Cameron Wilson, Fiona Lynch,  
Fran O'Toole

Secretariat: Cameron Wilson

## *Department of Children and Families Human Resource Committee*

Members as at 30 June 2011:

Chairperson: Helen Nezeritis

Members: Lorraine Williams, Fran O'Toole,  
Kellie Hutchins

Secretariat: Kellie Hutchins

## *Department of Children and Families Care and Protection Information Management Group*

Members as at 30 June 2011:

Chairperson: Peter Beirne (DoH)

Members: Fiona Lynch, Lorraine Williams,  
Leonie Warburton (DoH), Bronwyn Thompson,  
Stephen Moo (DoH), Peter Kerr (DoH)

Secretariat: Kara Blakely (DoH)

## **Appendix 3: Representation on Committees**

### **Representation on Committees – Australia**

- Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators Research Task Group
- Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards Review Group
- Australian Statutory Child Protection Learning and Development Group
- Building Capacity and Expertise Working Group (sub-group of the National Framework Implementation Working Group)
- Commonwealth, States, Territories and New Zealand Ministerial Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO)
- Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Council
- Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference
- Community Services - Disaster Recovery Sub-Committee
- Cross Jurisdiction Social Finance Working Group
- Homelessness Data Project Board
- Ministerial Working Group on Welfare Reform
- National Child Protection Clearinghouse Reference Group
- National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG)
- National Framework Implementation Working Group
- National Homelessness Working Group
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women – Senior Officials Working Group
- National Youth Working Group
- Performance and Data Working Group (PDWG)
- Protection and Support Services Working Group (PSSWG)
- Strategic Information Management Seeking Committee

- Women's Advisors Officials Group (Sub-committee of MINCO)
- Work Life Balance and Pay Equity Working Group

## Representation on Committees – Northern Territory

- Australian Early Development Index Co-ordination Committee
- Alice Springs Youth Co-ordination Committee
- Barkly Youth Services Providers Network
- Care for Child Development Steering Committee
- Centre for Child Development and Education Board (Menzies School of Health Research)
- Chief Executives Child Protection Taskforce
- Chief Executives (CE) Co-ordination Committee
- Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Directors Network
- Community Safety Working Group
- Cross Agency Mandatory Reporting/ Domestic and Family Violence Group
- Darwin and Rural Workers with Youth Network
- Darwin Region Interagency Tasking and Co-ordination Group
- Department of Health and Unions Consultative Committee
- Early Childhood Steering Committee
- Early Childhood Working Group
- Housing and Homelessness Advisory Group
- Information Sharing Legislative Reform Reference Group
- Integrated Family Services Working Group
- International Women's Day Darwin Committee
- Katherine Youth Interagency Tasking and Co-ordination Group

- Mental Health Tribunal
- Mind Matters Reference Group
- Mobile Outreach Service Plus Expert Reference Group
- Northern Territory Youth Affairs Network Sub-committee
- NT Remote Service Delivery Board of Management Committee
- NT Remote Service Delivery Co-ordination Committee
- NTG Youth Policy Framework Reference Group
- Palmerston and Rural Workers with Youth Network
- Remote Accommodation Working Party
- Social Responsibility Sub-committee
- Strategic Interagency Group (Family Responsibility Program)
- Youth Court Matters
- Youth Interagency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group & East Arnhem Youth Interagency Network
- Youth Justice Advisory Committee
- Youth Justice Review Expert Reference Panel
- Youth Services Alice Springs Forum

## Appendix 4: Board of Inquiry priority recommendations for annual reporting

### Recommendation 53

The recommendation that Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from recent Coronial Inquests and reports on progress in its Annual Report is met through the table on the next few pages. The left hand side of the table shows the recommendations arising from Coronial Inquest, with respondent actions outlined in the right of the table.

# Appendices

Recommendations	Actions
<b>DM Coronal – (Coroner’s reference D0109/2007)</b>	
1. The <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> be amended to include a requirement that a child under the care of the CEO and who is residing in the Territory must be visited by a person authorised by the CEO at least once every two months.	<p>Amendments have been made to the Policy and Procedure Manual to reflect this practice standard. Consultations on amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> are under way.</p> <p>The Department has developed an initial Staffing Resource Allocation model to ensure offices have sufficient resources to enable workers to meet this requirement.</p> <p>Since May 2010 the government has announced a total of 118 new positions within the Department of Children and Families.</p>
2. Regulations should be promulgated under section 78(3) of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> which specify certain basic standards of care that must be provided to a child at the placement arrangement.	<p>The <i>Care and Protection of Children Placement Arrangement) Regulations</i> came into force on 1 September 2010. These regulations specify certain basic standards of care that must be provided to a child.</p> <p>These Regulations are being reviewed in line with the recent <i>Growing them strong, together</i> recommendations and will incorporate the National Out of Home Care Standards that will be implemented from July 2011.</p>
3. Section 70 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> be amended to include that a care plan must refer to the basic standards of care specified in the Regulations. Consequential amendments should be made to section 76 of the Act.	<p>Consultations on amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> are under way.</p> <p>The current Case Plan template is being reviewed to ensure that the basic standards of care are reflected.</p> <p>A carer agreement is also being developed to ensure carers are aware of, and agree to, provide the basic standards of care.</p>
4. Section 74 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> should be amended to require the person conducting the six monthly review of the care plan to assess whether the carer is meeting the basic standards of care specified in the Regulations.	<p>Consultations on amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> are under way.</p> <p>The Policy and Procedures relating to Case Plans will be amended to stipulate that the standards of care must be considered during a Case Plan review. The Case Plan template is also being revised to reflect this.</p>



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Recommendations	Actions
5. Section 12 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> should be amended to include a sub-section specifying that a person with whom an Aboriginal child is placed be required to meet the basic standards of care specified in the Regulations.	<p>Consultations on amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> are under way.</p> <p>Current Policy and Procedures relating to all carers including carers of Aboriginal children are being reviewed.</p> <p>The current Case Plan template is also being reviewed to ensure it reflects the basic standards of care. A carer agreement is also being developed to ensure carers are aware of, and agree to, provide the basic standards of care.</p>
6. Consideration should be given to amending the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> to permit a regular court review of protection orders made under Subdivision 3 of Division 4 of Part 2.3 of the Act.	Regular court reviews of protection orders will be considered in the amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> currently under consultation.
7. Part 5.1 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> should be amended to provide for a regular two yearly review of administration of the Act in so far as it relates to protected children and to confer more specific powers on the Children's Commissioner to enable him or her to conduct such a review.	Regular two yearly review of administration of the Act as it relates to protected children and to confer more specific powers on the Children's Commissioner to conduct such reviews will be considered in the amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> which are currently under consultation.
8. Section 15 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2008</i> should be amended to include a definition of "cumulative harm" to a child.	<p>A definition of "cumulative harm" to a child will be considered in the amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> which are currently under consultation.</p> <p>Departmental policy and procedures have been amended to include a definition of "cumulative harm".</p>
9. Professional staff at FACS <sup>(1)</sup> should receive specific training concerning issues of identifying and dealing with issues of cumulative harm to children in the care of the CEO.	<p>Structure Decision Making (SDM) was introduced into the Central Intake system in July 2010. The SDM screening tool incorporates cumulative harm into the assessment. Staff have received training in the use of SDM.</p> <p>During 2010 two renowned experts in addressing cumulative harm delivered workshops to child protection staff.</p> <p>An awareness of cumulative harm has now been included in DCF core training and a practice paper on cumulative harm is now available to operational staff through the DCF Resource Manual.</p>

# Appendices

Recommendations	Actions
10. FACS <sup>(1)</sup> should develop a written handover system when one caseworker takes over a new case. Such a system should include a short succinct summary identifying any risk factors or areas of concern pertaining to the child in care.	The Policy and Procedures Manual relating to case transfers has been amended to ensure that guidelines are in place for all situations where caseworkers take over a new case.
11. FACS <sup>(1)</sup> should enhance its computerised information system to ensure that caseworkers can easily identify 'red flag' issues or issues of concern in respect of each child in care.	<p>Changes have been made to the client information system that will alert workers to critical information regarding children.</p> <p>To date changes have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing workers to see when other agencies have active involvement with a family;</li> <li>• Reports can now be produced that advise workers and management when compliance with standards such as face to face contact with a child has not been met.</li> <li>• Further development is occurring to ensure workers are automatically notified when it has been identified that a critical incident has occurred with a child in care and to easily identify issues of concern.</li> </ul>
12. FACS <sup>(1)</sup> notify the NT police of the name and address of a carer with whom the CEO has entered a placement arrangement, and develop a protocol for the police to notify FACS <sup>(1)</sup> in relation to any matters of interest relating to that carer or that address.	<p>Information sharing protocols have been drafted which will further improve cross agency information sharing, including between DCF and NT Police.</p> <p>All carers are required to undertake Working With Children Clearances and are required to have a current Ochre Card. NT Police through SAFE NT are responsible for the Ochre Card database.</p>
13. The carer application forms are amended to include information about all the children who have ever been in the care of an applicant.	All forms relating to the assessment and registration of carers are currently being reviewed and amended.

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Recommendations	Actions
14. FACS <sup>(1)</sup> provides sufficient administrative support in terms of administrative personnel and equipment for caseworkers to enable caseworkers to focus on their core responsibilities of protecting children in care.	<p>Since May 2010 the NT Government has announced a total of 118 new positions within the Department of Children and Families.</p> <p>These positions include 10 client information quality officers and additional team support workers who will ensure support is provided to caseworkers.</p> <p>A field book for child protection workers was developed to assist in timely recording of client contact that occurs away from the office. The field book was trialled in 2010 and a follow up review will be occurring in 2011-2012.</p> <p>The electronic client information system is also undergoing improvements to ensure workers have appropriate access to information and to streamline the process for entering duplicate information across multiple siblings.</p>
<b>Child 7 Coronial – (Coroner’s reference D0132/2007)</b>	
1a. It is recommended, in relation to systems (including computer and hard copy files systems), staff recruitment, training and support that adequate resources be given to fix these concerns.	<p>Since May 2010 the NT Government has announced a total of 118 new positions within the Department of Children and Families.</p> <p>These positions include 10 client information quality officers and additional team support workers who will ensure support is provided to caseworkers.</p> <p>A field book for child protection workers was developed to assist in timely recording of client contact that occurs away from the office. The field book was trialled in 2010 and a follow up review will be occurring in 2011-2012.</p> <p>The electronic client information system is also undergoing improvements to ensure workers have appropriate access to information and to streamline the process for entering duplicate information across multiple siblings.</p> <p>The Policy and Procedures Manual and training modules are currently being reviewed in line with the Coronial recommendations and the recent <i>Growing them strong, together</i> report.</p>
1b. It is also recommended that the MOU between FACS <sup>(1)</sup> and the Police be formally signed off.	The MOU between the Department of Children and Families and the Police was signed in April 2010.

<sup>(1)</sup> FACS refers to Family and Children’s Services, an acronym used to describe Northern Territory Family and Children, the services of which are now under the jurisdiction of the Department of Children and Families.

# Appendices

## Recommendation 54

The recommendation that Northern Territory Families and Children continues with its implementation of recommendations from the High Risk Audit and reports on progress in its annual report is met in the following table.

Recommendations	Actions
1. Given that there has been a lot of recent research into risk assessment and child protection intake systems, and that there have been recent reviews of the intake processes in other states, a review of the current NT tools and processes should be undertaken.	<p>The Policy and Procedures Manual and the Intake tools have been reviewed. As a result the following actions occurred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new intake event was introduced in the electronic Client Information System on 1 July 2009;</li> <li>• Structured Decision Making (SDM) Tools for Intake commenced from 1 July 2010;</li> <li>• An Internal review of Central Intake was finalised in June 2009;</li> <li>• In late 2010 the Client Summary View was commenced in the client information system allowing a more holistic view of a family's child protection records.</li> </ul>
2. That FACS <sup>(1)</sup> develops a comprehensive strategy to facilitate and integrate service development for children and young people with high needs and challenging behaviours. This plan should cover the development of identification, assessment and case management protocols as well as educational, recreational, therapeutic, and accommodation options for the local young people. It should involve plans for resourcing, recruiting, and training, supervising and supporting those who work with troubled youth and for the phased development of specialised intervention services. It should also address the need for cross-Program and NGO collaboration.	<p>The Shared Client Case Management Framework and the Information Sharing Policy were implemented on 5 October 2009 to facilitate communication across programs.</p> <p>The electronic client information system (CCIS) was upgraded to support these policies, allowing workers to see when other programs are actively involved with a family.</p> <p>In July 2010, Structured Decision Making tools were implemented in Central Intake to support professionals in the assessment process. Additional Structured Decision Making tools relating to Safety and Risk during case management will be trialled in July 2011.</p> <p>The <i>Youth Justice Act (Family Responsibility)</i> amendment was passed and commenced in 2008. This amendment enables work to occur with families to address young people's antisocial or criminal behaviours.</p> <p>Three therapeutic youth camps are currently funded to provide intensive intervention with at risk youth.</p> <p>In 2010, an After Hours Service focused on youth at risk commenced in Alice Springs.</p>

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Recommendations	Actions
	<p>The Alice Springs Safe Places commenced in March 2011. The Darwin Safe Places is expected to be operational during 2010-2011.</p> <p>A new category has been developed to differentiate between responses to allegations of child abuse and responses to young people who are engaging in dangerous behaviour.</p> <p>A Supervision Framework to support Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff has been developed and implemented in 2010/11.</p> <p>DCF and the Department of Health (DoH) are working collaboratively in the establishment of therapeutic Secure Care facilities for youth in Darwin and Alice Springs.</p>
<p>3. It is recommended that the NT Government, as part of an overall strategy for responding to the needs of young people with high and complex needs, consider the development of a small-scale 'secure care' facility to provide a temporary containment and treatment option for young people at extreme risk. Secure welfare facilities are operated by Human Services in Victoria, are under development in Western Australia, and are being considered by other states. Planning around secure care options might be undertaken in the context of a broader high-risk youth strategy.</p>	<p>In June 2009 the NTG announced a package of \$13.9M capital and \$11.4M recurrent operational funding for secure care. This will comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two beds for children and young people in the Darwin and Alice Springs Mental Health units for short-term stabilisation, assessment, initial treatment and comprehensive case planning are under development</li> <li>• Two eight-bed secure group houses are being constructed in Darwin and Alice Springs and will be used for medium-term support, on-going assessment, case management and therapeutic intervention.</li> </ul> <p>Proposals for legislative amendments to the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> to enable secure care services to be implemented will be considered during 2011-2012.</p>
<p>4. It is recommended that FACS<sup>(1)</sup> urgently review the policies and practices around case transfers between regions and offices to address recurrent issues arising from communication problems and disputes around case 'ownership'.</p>	<p>A review of the Policy and Practice manual has been completed with policy updated to ensure more responsive service delivery.</p> <p>Training resources to support staff to implement the policy have also been updated.</p>



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Recommendations	Actions
<p>5. It is recommended that FACS<sup>(1)</sup> institute a plan to substantially improve the compliance rates relating to the requirements around the assessment and training of carers, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that relative and 'other' carers offer a comparable standard of safety and care to that provided to the children in regular foster care placements.</p>	<p>In response to the High Risk Audit a Quality Framework was developed in 2008 and implemented.</p> <p>The Quality Team internally reviewed 10% of substitute care cases on a monthly basis against core policy standards</p> <p>A Family Care Policy was also developed and introduced in April 2008.</p> <p>In response to the recent <i>Growing them strong, together</i> report, policies and the audit/quality processes relating to foster and relative carers will be reviewed.</p>
<p>6. It is recommended that FACS<sup>(1)</sup> develop and implement a plan to significantly reduce its reliance on care providers who have not been appropriately assessed, licensed or trained.</p>	<p>A review of internal processes has occurred in the Placement Support Team ensuring that sourcing placements from alternate providers is the option of last resort.</p> <p>An Out of Home Care Training Officer position has been established to increase the training delivered to all carers and to collaborate with other agencies to share mutual training opportunities.</p>
<p>7. It is recommended that FACS<sup>(1)</sup> reviews the risk assessment sections of the FACS<sup>(1)</sup> Policy and Practice Manual and provide a more prescriptive format that focuses on the ongoing assessment and management of risk.</p>	<p>The Policy and Procedures Manual has been reviewed and amended to incorporate the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Tools that have now been adopted. SDM Tools for Central Intake have been used from 1 July 2010 to support workers in the assessment process.</p> <p>Additional SDM Tools will be trialled in the field from 1 July 2011. These will assist workers involved in ongoing case management and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety and Risk Assessment Tool; and</li> <li>• Family Strengths and Needs.</li> </ul> <p>The risk assessment tool will give the decision as to whether risk of future harm is sufficient to require ongoing services to reduce the risk. If ongoing services are required, a risk re-assessment will be undertaken no more than 90 days after the completion of the original case plan and every 90 days thereafter.</p>
<p>8. It is recommended that FACS<sup>(1)</sup> investigate the possibility of instituting a risk-based foster family classification system. Such a system might help identify foster families that need higher levels of supervision and support. Updated risk classifications could be included as components of the regular annual case reviews.</p>	<p>Since 2007, substantial reviews of policies relating to the assessment, training and support of carers have been conducted.</p> <p><i>The Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangement) Regulations</i> came into force on 1 September 2010. These regulations specify certain basic standards of care that must be provided to a child at the placement arrangement.</p>

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Recommendations	Actions
	<p>The current Case Plan template will be reviewed by the end of 2011 to ensure that the basic standards of care are reflected and to take into consideration the recommendations in the <i>Growing them strong, together</i> report.</p> <p>A carer agreement is being developed to ensure carers are aware of, and agree to provide, the basic standards of care.</p> <p>A formal partnership agreement will be developed between carers and DCF as well as increased funding provided to support carers.</p> <p>There will also be a clear complaints mechanism for carers as well as the development of a Carer's Charter.</p>
<p>9. Having identified a child with special health needs, it is recommended that the risk level of the child should be determined, and there should be a process of intensive monitoring until such time as a health assessment indicates that there are no longer special needs.</p>	<p>A review of the policy and procedures related to the case management of children in care has been completed.</p> <p>The Case Plan template used for children in care incorporates a section related to the health of a child to ensure appropriate planning is in place to meet the needs of the child.</p>
<p>10. When a child known to FACS<sup>(1)</sup> moves out-of-area it is recommended that there should be a timely and efficient process of case transfer that includes the forwarding of the paper file, and a joint review of risk status and intervention planning.</p>	<p>A review of the Policy and Practice manual has been completed with policy rewritten to ensure a responsive service.</p> <p>Training has been updated to support staff to implement the policy.</p>
<p>11. When a child is assessed as 'conditionally safe' contingent on the engagement of 'wraparound' supports, it is recommended that there is some system of monitoring to ensure that these supports are engaged.</p>	<p>The Policy and Procedure Manual has been reviewed and amended to incorporate the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Tools that have now been adopted.</p> <p>Feedback is formally provided to notifiers to ensure that there is an awareness regarding the status of child protection services involvement. This enables services to re-notify if a child's situation changes.</p> <p>As part of the previous Department of Health and Families, Child Protection Services undertook a review of policy and procedures and was involved in the development of a cross program risk tool within the Shared Client Case Management Framework.</p> <p>A key part of this Framework included changes to the electronic client information system that allowed workers to identify when other program areas were active with a family.</p> <p>It is intended to introduce further SDM tools in July 2011, which include the Safety Assessment Tool.</p>

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Recommendations	Actions
	<p>The Safety Assessment Tool will guide the decision as to whether a child is 'safe', 'unsafe', or 'safe with a plan', with the latter replacing 'conditionally safe'. Where a child is assessed as 'safe with a plan', a plan is negotiated with the parents and will identify the supports and conditions required to enable the child to remain safely in the home. The plan is to be monitored by a case worker and will be reviewed if there is a change in circumstances. Additionally, it is intended that a 'safety assessment' will need to be completed before the case can be closed.</p>
12 – 18	Recommendations in relation to the Department of Health.
19	Recommendations in relation to the Department of Health.
20 – 22	Recommendations in relation to the Department of Health.
<p>23. It is recommended that each of the Community Services Programs develops an annual risk management plan in accordance with the DHCS<sup>(2)</sup> Policy document on Risk Management dated 23 January 2004, that, amongst the other requirements, specifically identifies risks to clients and others. The risk management plan will need to set out 'specific treatments' as stated in the policy.</p>	<p>As part of the previous Department of Health and Families, the child protection program participated in revising the Risk Management Policy and Guidelines which were approved in 2009.</p> <p>In 2009, operational policy was updated to include the Reportable Incidents Framework which assisted in the identification of specific risks to clients and provided appropriate response pathways.</p> <p>On 1 January 2011, the Department of Children and Families was created using some shared corporate services with the Department of Health (DoH). As a result the Department continues to utilise the existing Risk Management Policy and Guidelines.</p> <p>A Risk Management Framework specific to the Department of Children and Families will be developed in 2011-2012 following the release of the Department's Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>24. It is recommended that the Community Services Division develop a 'flagging' system in CCIS [the electronic client information system] whereby workers in one Program are alerted to the fact that the client (and/or an immediate family member) is being served by another Program within the Division.</p>	<p>A Shared Care Case Management Framework was developed between the program areas.</p> <p>A key part of this framework was changes to the electronic client information system that allowed workers to identify when other program areas are active with a family. This was implemented in October 2009.</p>

# Appendices

Recommendations	Actions
<p>25. It is recommended that within six months, the Community Service Division develops and implements a Complex Needs Case Coordination strategy that includes prescriptive guidelines for cross-Program coordination in those cases where high risk is identified and there is multiple Program case involvement.</p>	<p>A Shared Care Case Management Framework was developed between the program areas.</p> <p>The Shared Care Case Management Framework articulates how programs will at a minimum share risk information and where appropriate provide a holistic identification and assessment of client risk and coordinate risk management plans.</p> <p>A risk assessment tool has also been incorporated into the Framework to ensure consistency in the identification, assessment and rating of clients identified as presenting risks of harm to themselves and/or others.</p>
<p>26. It is recommended that each Community Services Program ensures it has a coherent mechanism for the identification and classification of each client in terms of risk status; that funded NGOs are assessed as to their capacity to manage clients at high risk levels; that the service requirements outlined in the service plans be reviewed to more specifically reflect the need for adequate risk assessment and management (as outlined above); and that formal internal auditing processes be instituted to ensure that NGOs comply with the funding conditions.</p>	<p>The Department of Children and Families was created in January 2011. Previously child protection services followed the Risk Management Policy and Guidelines of the former Department of Health and Families.</p> <p>A Risk Management process specific to the Department of Children and Families is currently being developed.</p> <p>This process will include undertaking internal audits to ensure NGO service agreements reflect the need for risk assessments and management, and that processes are in place to determine NGO compliance with the service agreements.</p>
<p>27. It is recommended that each Program identify the practice areas where risk to clients is compromised because of a lack of casework compliance with statutory and policy guidelines and to establish why this is occurring. From this analysis, each Program needs to institute a strategic plan to address the problems of compliance along with appropriate goals, timeframes and review processes.</p>	<p>A Quality Framework was introduced in early 2008 and assisted in monitoring compliance with legislation and policy.</p> <p>In 2009, a Quality Summit was held to further develop strategies to improve compliance. In response to the Board of Inquiry report, <i>Growing them strong, together</i> and the commencement of the Department of Children and Families Quality Framework subsequent strategies will be undergoing a review.</p>
<p>28. It is recommended that strategies be developed to ensure that processes of policy standardisation within Programs be expedited and that the imperatives pertaining to risk assessment and management are clarified. The standardisation strategy should include timeframes and a plan for familiarising all workers with the updated requirements.</p>	<p>As part of the previous Department of Health and Families, Child Protection Services undertook a review of policy and procedures and was involved in the development of a cross program risk tool within the Shared Client Case Management Framework.</p> <p>With the establishment of the Department of Children and Families and in line with the Board of Inquiry report <i>Growing them strong, together</i> recommendations, a further review of policy and risk management will be undertaken.</p>

# Appendices

Recommendations	Actions
29. Given that recording and documentation problems were found across all four Community Services Programs, it is recommended that the relevant recommendations pertaining to record management in the two internal reviews, should apply to all four Programs.	<p>As part of the previous Department of Health and Families, Child Protection Services was involved in the review and updating of the Records Management policy in December 2008.</p> <p>As a result of the creation of the new Department of Children and Families a further review considering the new needs of the Department will be occurring.</p>
30. It is recommended that each of the Community Services Programs develops a comprehensive workforce strategy to address recruitment and retention needs.	<p>As part of the previous Department of Health and Families, Child Protection Services was involved in the development of the 2008-2011 Strategic Workforce Plan and the 2008-2011 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Workforce Plan.</p> <p>Since commencing as a new Department, the Department of Children and Families is in the process of developing a comprehensive workforce strategy in line with the <i>Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework</i>.</p>

(1) FACS refers to Family and Children's Services, an acronym used to describe Northern Territory Family and Children, the services of which are now under the jurisdiction of the Department of Children and Families.

(2) DHCS refers to the Department of Health and Community Services, the predecessor to the Department of Health and Families, which has since become the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Health.

## Recommendation 55

The recommendation that Northern Territory Families and Children continues to support and influence the introduction and implementation of the National Standards for Out-of-Home Care and reports progress in its annual report is met in the detailed table below.

The National Out-of-Home Care Standards were endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009 and are due to be implemented in July 2011. In early 2011 work

was undertaken to review the current Northern Territory Out-of-Home Care environment against the National Out-of-Home Care Standards. This review provided a base from which comprehensive strategies can be developed to further improve the Northern Territory's Out-of-Home Care system and ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. The table below represents actions undertaken to implement the National Out-of-Home Care Standards.



# Appendices

Standards	Actions
1. Children and young people will be provided with stability and security during their time in care. The Department of Children and Families is undertaking a policy review to include permanency and stability planning for children in care.	Initiatives to further develop carer training, recruitment and support are also occurring to ensure carers are retained, resulting in more stable care for children.
2. Children and young people participate in decisions that have an impact on their lives.	<p>The Northern Territory's legislation and policy supports children and young people to participate in decision making during their time in care.</p> <p>To further support this, a Charter for Children and Young People in Care is being developed.</p> <p>Case plan policies and templates are being reviewed to ensure that children are provided with an opportunity to have their input formally recorded.</p> <p>Work is underway with Create NT to develop regular and ongoing mechanisms such as forums to listen to the voices of children and young people.</p> <p>A new complaints process is being developed that will allow children and carers to raise concerns.</p>
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities participate in decisions concerning the care and placement of their children and young people.	<p>A peak body has been developed through the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory to support and develop Aboriginal Child Care Agencies in Darwin and Alice Springs.</p> <p>Aboriginal Family Group Conferencing will be expanded across the Territory.</p> <p>Policies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care and the Cultural Case template will be reviewed. This review will aim to ensure that there is appropriate consultation and input from Aboriginal families regarding the care of their children.</p>
4. Each child and young person has an individualised plan that details their health, education and other needs.	<p>Current Department of Children and Families policy requires that all children in care have a current Case Plan and where appropriate a Cultural Case Plan.</p> <p>The Case Plan currently incorporates life domains including health and education.</p> <p>The Case Plan and Cultural Case Plan are being reviewed in line with the Board of Inquiry report, <i>Growing them strong, together</i> recommendations.</p>

# Appendices

Standards	Actions
5. Children and young people have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs assessed and attended to in a timely way.	<p>All children entering care are required to undergo a baseline assessment to identify any areas of need including health, dental, educational and psychological.</p> <p>Case Plans also provide life domains that assist in planning to address any concerns identified in the baseline assessment and/or identified in later assessments.</p> <p>A Case Plan is required to be developed within two months of a child coming into care and reviewed every six months thereafter.</p>
6. Children and young people in care access and participate in education and early childhood services to maximise their educational outcomes.	<p>All children entering care are required to undergo a baseline assessment to identify any areas of need including education.</p> <p>Case Plans assist in planning to ensure issues identified are successfully addressed.</p> <p>In 2008, the Joint Partnership Agreement for the Prioritisation of Services for Students in Care was revised with the Department of Education and Training (DET).</p> <p>The Agreement articulates collaborative working arrangements to deliver prioritised services to children in the care of the CEO.</p>
7. Children and young people up to at least 18 years are supported to be engaged in appropriate education, training and/or employment.	<p>The <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> makes provision for supporting young people leaving care and those who have already left care. It is a Departmental policy requirement for a young person's Case Plan to be modified prior to them leaving care to ensure appropriate supports are in place.</p> <p>The Department of Children and Families' policy includes the provision of support in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education or training, including payment of tertiary fees, purchase of textbooks, relocation expenses to attend training or an educational facility, and driving lessons.</li> <li>• Employment, including the purchase of uniforms, tools required for a position, safety equipment, and relocation expenses.</li> </ul> <p>DCF through the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness funds Anglicare NT to deliver the NT-wide 'Moving On', After Care Support and Brokerage Service. This service commenced in May 2011 and provides information, assessments, referral, advocacy, support and limited case management for young people who have transitioned from care. The focus is on improving the health, wellbeing and economic outcomes for these young people.</p>

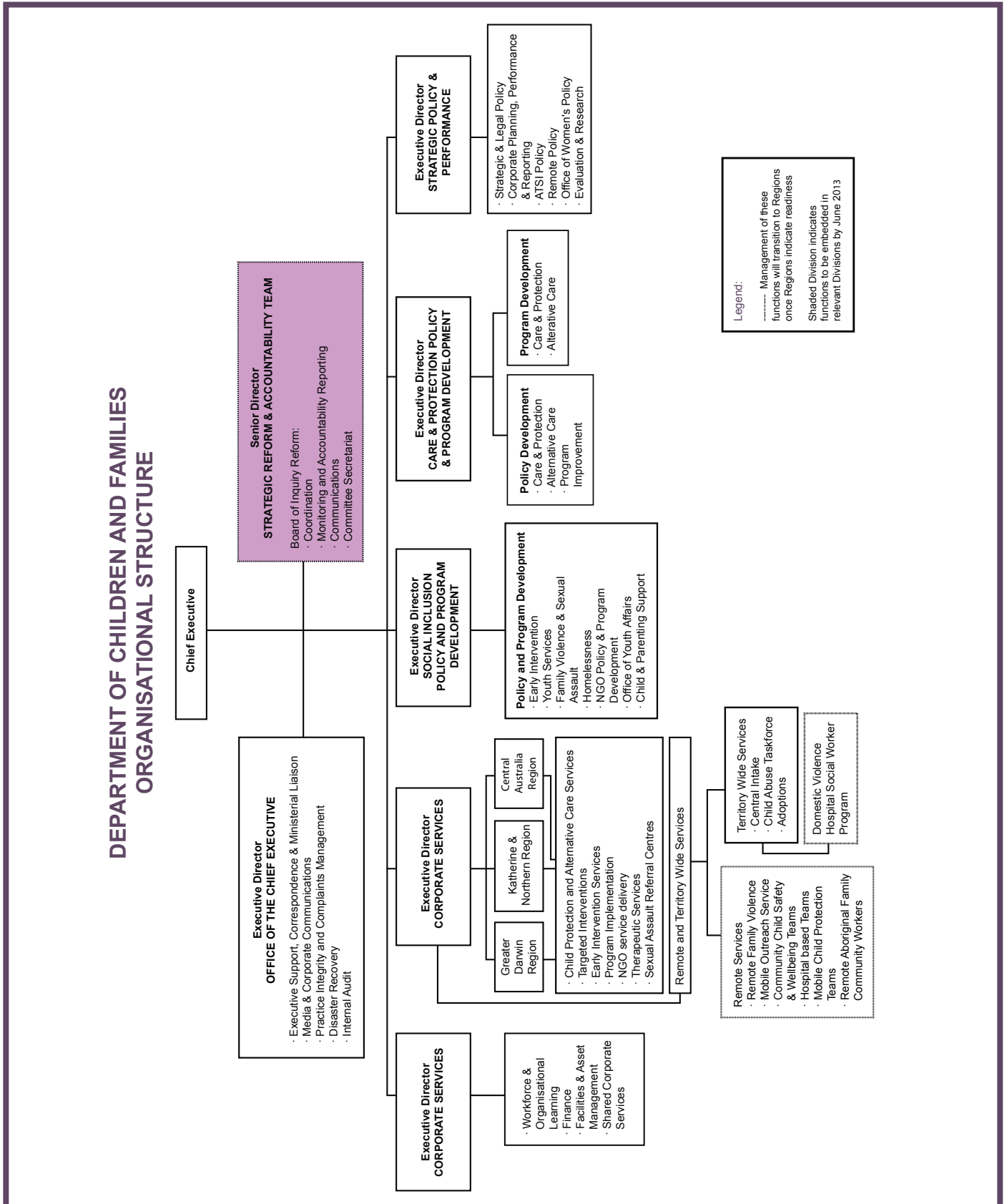
# Appendices

Standards	Actions
	DCF also funds CREATE Foundation NT to connect, support, empower and provide opportunities and programs to children and young people up to the age of 25 years, who are in, or have transitioned, from care.
8. Children and young people in care are supported to participate in social and/or recreational activities of their choice, such as sporting, cultural or community activity.	<p>Taking a child's views into consideration is a requirement in legislation and is also upheld in policy.</p> <p>The Case Plan template is flexible to allow workers to include social and recreational activities that assist in the development of a child's identity and provide developmental opportunities.</p> <p>The Cultural Case Plan is also available to plan activities that will actively support the child to take part in culturally relevant activities.</p> <p>Further review of policy will be undertaken to assist in improving compliance against this standard.</p>
9. Children and young people are supported to safely and appropriately maintain connection with family, be they birth parents, siblings or other family members.	<p>The Department of Children and Families Policy and Procedures document provides guidelines to ensure family contact is supported.</p> <p>The individual Case Plan developed for each child has a section devoted to contact arrangements.</p>
10. Children and young people in care are supported to develop their identity, safely and appropriately, through contact with their families, friends, culture, spiritual sources and communities and have their life history recorded as they grow up.	<p>The Department of Children and Families Policy and Procedures document provides guidelines to ensure family contact is supported.</p> <p>Life story books are encouraged to enhance a child's understanding of their identity.</p> <p>The individual Case Plans developed for each child have sections devoted to the child's sense of identity and contact with family.</p> <p>Where appropriate, Cultural Case Plans are also developed to ensure the child's cultural knowledge and identity is maintained and developed.</p>
11. Children and young people in care are supported to safely and appropriately identify and stay in touch, with at least one other person who cares about their future, who they can turn to for support and advice.	<p>Departmental policy recognises the importance of significant people in the life of a child or young person.</p> <p>The Case Plan template allows for the inclusion of a 'Significant other' to be involved in ongoing contact arrangements for the child.</p> <p>Further review of policy will be undertaken to support workers in achieving compliance against this standard.</p>

# Appendices

Standards	Actions
12. Carers are assessed and receive relevant ongoing training, development and support, in order to provide quality care.	<p>There has been substantial review of policies relating to the assessment, training and support of carers.</p> <p>The <i>Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangement) Regulations</i> came into force on 1 September 2010. These regulations specify certain basic standards of care that must be provided to a child at the placement arrangement.</p> <p>A further review of the standards will occur in 2011-2012 to take into consideration the recent recommendations in the Board of Inquiry report, <i>Growing them strong, together</i>.</p> <p>A carer agreement is being developed to ensure carers are aware of, and agree to provide, the basic standards of care.</p> <p>A new assessment and training program for carers is currently being implemented to up skill carers and ensure appropriate matching between the needs of the child and the skills of the carer.</p> <p>A formal Partnership agreement will be developed between carers and DCF as well as increased funding provided to support carers.</p> <p>A clear complaints mechanism is being developed as well as a Carer's Charter.</p>
13. Children and young people have a transition from care plan commencing at 15 years old which details support to be provided after leaving care.	<p>In the Northern Territory it is both a legislative and a policy requirement for a young person to have a Transition From Care Plan.</p> <p>The Department of Children and Families has a policy entitled, <i>Preparing Young People To Leave Care</i> which aims to support young people aged 15 years and older in their transition out of care.</p>

## Appendix 5: Department of Children and Families Organisational Structure (announced August 2011)



# Glossary

<b>AIHW</b>	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
<b>AIS</b>	Aboriginal Interpreter Service
<b>AMSANT</b>	Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory
<b>COAG</b>	Council of Australian Governments
<b>CCD</b>	Care for Child Development
<b>CCIS</b>	Community Care Information System
<b>CE</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CIT</b>	Central Intake Team
<b>COAG</b>	Council of Australian Governments
<b>CPMIM</b>	Child Protection Measure Income Management
<b>DAIWS</b>	Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Business and Employment
<b>DCF</b>	Department of Children and Families
<b>DET</b>	Department of Education and Training
<b>D/FV</b>	Domestic/Family Violence
<b>DHCS</b>	Department of Health and Community Services
<b>DoH</b>	Department of Health
<b>DVO</b>	Domestic Violence Order
<b>FACS</b>	Family and Children's Services
<b>FRA</b>	Family Responsibility Agreement
<b>FSP</b>	Family Support Package
<b>IMC</b>	Information Management Committee
<b>IMG</b>	Information Management Group
<b>IWD</b>	International Women's Day
<b>MAC</b>	Multi-agency Assessment and Co-ordination
<b>MINCO</b>	Commonwealth, States, Territories and New Zealand Ministerial Council on the Status of Women



# Glossary

<b>MOS</b>	Mobile Outreach Service
<b>NAHA</b>	National Affordable Housing Agreement
<b>NAPCAN</b>	National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organisation
<b>NHMRC</b>	National Health and Medical Research Council
<b>NT</b>	Northern Territory
<b>NTG</b>	Northern Territory Government
<b>OH&amp;S</b>	Occupational Health and Safety
<b>OWP</b>	Office of Women's Policy
<b>OYA</b>	Office of Youth Affairs
<b>PIPS</b>	Personnel Information and Payroll System
<b>PPP</b>	Productivity Places Program
<b>RARI</b>	Remote Area Rotation Initiative
<b>SAAP</b>	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
<b>SARC</b>	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
<b>SDM</b>	Structured Decision Making
<b>SHSC</b>	Specialist Homelessness Services Collection
<b>SMART</b>	Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nation's Children's Fund
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WHSa</b>	Workplace Health and Safety Act
<b>WRANS</b>	Women's Royal Australian Naval Service
<b>YHOPP</b>	Youth Housing Options and Pathways Program
<b>YJAC</b>	Youth Justice Advisory Committee



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# Public availability of report



## Public availability of report

The annual report is available via the Department of Children and Families website.

The web address is:  
<http://childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/index.aspx>

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