



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2016

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Centres**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.08 am): One of our government's highest priorities is to reduce the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care. With that firmly in mind, I am pleased to announce that tenders will open next week for the second stage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family wellbeing services in Queensland. This second stage will see services opened in an additional 15 locations across Queensland. Those will be established in locations across the south-east, the south-west, the north coast, the central north and Far North Queensland. Stage 2 represents almost \$128 million over five years for those crucial new wellbeing services. These are on top of the four new services I have previously announced. I am happy to update the House that the first four services will commence this December in Roma, Mackay, South Burnett and Moreton Bay.

The shortlisting of providers for these service is now underway and we have been encouraged by the responses we have received. In total, this new investment will create more than 130 jobs, all within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations. By 2018 these new services will offer support to up to 6,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to help care for their children.

We all agree we need to rethink how we work with families and communities to keep children safe. The new family wellbeing services will draw from the richness and diversity in the community to design local responses that focus on healing support, restoring people's social and emotional wellbeing and building the resilience of families. This can only come about when we work with community leaders and community run organisations.

These are the conversations I will be having when I and my director-general visit the Torres Strait this weekend. I have already seen community response in action in the community of St Paul's on Moa Island. I know there are many more examples of community responses keeping children safe within culture that we can support and partner with, and we will with these new services. These new wellbeing services are an excellent example of what we can achieve when we work together to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Islander children and families.