




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2017

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (11.47 am): As previously stated, the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee has oversight of the Family Responsibilities Commission. Last year when I was on the Finance and Administration Committee we had oversight of the commission but did not travel to Far North Queensland. A number of months ago the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee travelled to Cairns in Far North Queensland and sat down with Commissioner David Glasgow and his team to get a run-down as to the hard work they do in the communities they have oversight of.

We also travelled to the community of Aurukun with the Family Responsibilities Commission, the police and a number of different agencies and were able to see firsthand the huge respect that the locals have for the Family Responsibilities Commission—not only for Commissioner David Glasgow but also for the local commissioners. They were having hearings the day that we were there. We had lunch with the local commissioners and spoke with them about the work they do. Interestingly, a number of those commissioners had been doing it for a very long time. It became apparent to the committee that succession planning in respect of the FRC was important—not only for the commissioner but also for the local commissioners in the communities. Whilst they do an awesome job, they were very much giving us an indication that most of them were looking at stepping aside. We picked up in our review that succession planning in the area of the Family Responsibilities Commission was vitally important.

They have an amazing relationship with the local police and, in particular, the Aurukun school. There is a huge amount of respect from businesses as well as the local council. We picked up on some issues along the reporting line in relation to relationships with education and youth justice. David Glasgow was chasing those up with the respective departments, so that the FRC is able to get an earlier insight when a student either is not attending school or is caught up in youth justice and the commissioners are able to get involved and see what is happening at an earlier stage. I believe that that work is continuing. We were concerned that Commissioner David Glasgow was going to end his tenure. During this year's estimates hearings he told us that his term had been extended to 30 June 2018, which is very good news. However, certainly we need to look at what will happen after 30 June 2018 if Mr Glasgow decides to move on.

In conclusion, certainly from what I saw and the conversations I had in Aurukun, I know that this is an extremely important organisation that does amazing work in very fragile communities. I very much support the work that they do. I am sure this House very much supports the work that they do. I wish them all the best. In particular, I wish Mr Glasgow all the best in his future endeavours.