



Speech By  
**Wendy Bourne**


**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 June 2025

**EDUCATION, ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to take note**

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.14 pm): I rise today as a member of the Education, Arts and Communities Committee, tasked with providing oversight to the Family Responsibilities Commission. It was great to see firsthand the work of the FRC in Cooktown and Hope Vale, and I say to the House it was a real privilege to visit Cooktown and Hope Vale, my very first trip to those communities.

I would like to begin my speech by acknowledging Commissioner Tammy Williams who is doing an incredible job as Commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission, a true leader in the community. I would also like to acknowledge the local councillors of the FRC—Cheryl Florence Cannon, Erica Deeral, Priscilla Gibson, Robert Gibson, Doreen Hart, Selina Kerr-Bowen and Kathryn Dora Gibson.

The FRC operates in five communities—Aurukun, Coen, Doomadgee, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. Their strategic objectives are to: support the restoration of socially responsible standards of behaviour; help people in welfare reform communities to resume primary responsibility for the wellbeing of their communities; create a capable, culturally safe, agile and innovative organisation; and improve engagement through co-design and partnerships.

The Education, Arts and Communities Committee's role is oversight responsibility to: monitor and review the FRC's performance of its functions; report to the Legislative Assembly on any matter concerning the FRC, its functions or the performance of its functions; examine their annual report; and report to the Legislative Assembly any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the FRC. The FRC plays a unique and valuable role in supporting communities. Through their conferences, they encourage socially responsible behaviour. Their duty is to protect vulnerable people, including children.

I appreciate the time the FRC gave us when visiting Hope Vale, particularly when they were in a period of sorry business with the loss of Mr Victor Gibson OAM. Mr Gibson was the founding local commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission and continued to serve until poor health forced his retirement. It would be remiss of me not to mention his family and community who have lost this cherished elder—his wife, Commissioner Priscilla Gibson, and his sister, Doreen Hart, who is also a founding local commissioner in Hope Vale. This visit helped us better understand how the FRC operates and how they serve their communities. I acknowledge all commissioners and respected community members who encourage individuals to take steps to make lasting changes in their lives.

Commissioner Tammy Williams, along with local commissioners, were very gracious with the time they gave us during that three-day visit. We took part in a roundtable discussion with FRC staff and representatives from the Cape York Institute which was a valuable chance to hear their views and ideas. It was also a privilege to be part of a private meeting with a family during this visit where you

could see firsthand the wonderful work that the commission does. FRC commissioners spoke to the committee about their success of voluntary income management and their client engagement approach showing the commission as being valued and respected within the community.

During our visit, we visited several key places such as Hope Vale O-Hub, the Wellbeing Centre and the amazing Cooktown State School. These visits gave us a better picture of the supports in place.

I support the great work this commission does and hope that the current government is looking at renewing funding for this very vital service. I commend the report to the House.