



Commission for Children and Young People
Annual Report

02-03



Commission for
Children & Young People
Queensland Government



Acknowledgments

The Commission thanks Rebecca Hassett for the photographs on pages 34, 39 and 43.

annual report



Annual Report
02-03



Commission for Children and Young People

The Honourable Peter Beattie MP
Premier and Minister for Trade
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Beattie

The Commission for Children and Young People is pleased to present this Annual Report for the 2002-2003 financial year.

The report outlines the Commission's key roles and functions and details its performance, including key achievements and outcomes for 2002-2003. It is in accordance with the provisions of section 46J of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977*.

I wish to commend this report to you. It shows how the hard work and commitment of the Commission's staff contributed to the ongoing promotion and protection of the rights, interests and wellbeing of Queensland's children and young people in 2002-03.

Robin Sullivan
Commissioner for Children and Young People

Letter 1



Communication objectives

This report provides the Premier, Members of Parliament, key stakeholders and all Queenslanders with an account of the Commission's key functions, priorities and achievements in the 2002-03 financial year.

The report provides interested parties with the means to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission over this time, and ensures its openness and accountability.

It covers the Commission's key outcomes, highlights and outlook by reporting against each key operational area:

- communications
- community visitors
- complaints and investigations
- corporate services
- employment screening
- policy, and
- research.

Further information can be found in the Commission's Strategic Plan 2001-05, the 2002-03 Ministerial Portfolio Statements and on the Commission's website - www.childcomm.qld.gov.au

Readers are welcome to provide feedback on this report through the Commission's website (as above).

Vision

To promote and protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of all Queensland's children and young people, now and for the future.

Principles

The guiding principles underpinning the Commission's operations are:

- every child and young person is a valued member of society
- in decisions involving a child or young person, their best interests are paramount, and their views and wishes should be taken into account with regard to their age and maturity
- children and young people are entitled to:
 - have their dignity and privacy respected
 - be cared for in ways that protect them from harm and promote their wellbeing
 - express concerns and grievances and have them dealt with in a fair, timely way that promotes their participation
 - receive information and help to exercise their entitlements
 - access services necessary to meet their needs.
- the family has primary responsibility for a child's upbringing and development and should be supported in that role.

Contents

VISION	2	OTHER ACTIVITIES	48
PRINCIPLES	2	Our relationships	48
COMMISSIONER'S REPORT	4	Community engagement	50
OUR HISTORY, OUR ROLE	6	OTHER INFORMATION	51
Our history	6	Statutory responsibilities	51
Our role	7	Overseas travel	52
KEY OUTCOME AREAS AND HIGHLIGHTS	8	Freedom of information	52
Key outcome areas	8	Information privacy	52
Highlights – year at a glance	8	Whistleblowers	52
OUR PEOPLE	10	Consultancies	52
Senior executive team	10	Publications	52
Management team	11	Presentations	53
Staff profile	12	FINANCIAL SUMMARY	55
Women	14	FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	56
Staff development	14		
Workforce management	14		
Diversity	15		
Including children and young people	15		
Organisational chart	16		
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	17		
Senior management group	17		
Internal audit	18		
External audit	18		
Protecting personal information	18		
Social and environmental responsibility	18		
Corporate governance enhancements	19		
Risk management and internal controls	20		
Asset management	21		
Code of conduct	21		
ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY	22		
Communication	22		
Community Visitors	26		
Complaints and Investigations	30		
Corporate Services	34		
Employment Screening Services	37		
Policy	40		
Research	44		



Commissioner's Report



Robin Sullivan
Commissioner for
Children and Young People

It has been a busy year for the Commission for Children and Young People as we consolidate our operations.

The demands on staff and the Senior Executive Team this financial year have been enormous, but our people have risen to the challenge. I would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication in bringing the Commission to the position it is in today.

The work of the Commission in this time can be broadly categorised into proactive and reactive responses to safeguarding the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland.

Proactive

The Commission has been particularly proactive in a range of areas this financial year.

Working with Children Kit and training program

One of the most practical manifestations of this activity can be seen in the creation of the *Working with Children Kit* and its associated training program.

The kit promotes policies and practices which help create environments friendly to children and young people and keep them safe from harm. It complements the Commission's Working with Children Check and provides advice on a range of areas, including Codes of Conduct, recruitment and selection, planning activities and handling disclosures of harm. The uptake of the kit and accompanying training program has been enthusiastic and the Commission has received much complimentary feedback on the package.

Child Labour Review

The Commission's Child Labour Review, which began in March 2003, was prompted by a range of issues, including reports of school-aged children working excessive hours, employment of children in adult entertainment and the need to address workplace conditions, including issues like workplace bullying.

Cabinet endorsed the Commission to undertake the review to ensure the rights of children and young people under 18 are protected in the workplace. Work on the review is still in train, but it is expected to canvass a broad range of issues and information about child labour in Queensland.

Advocacy Training Program

The Executive Director, Barry Salmon visited our counterparts in New Zealand, the Office of the Commissioner for Children in June 2002, prompting us to follow in their footsteps by creating an Advocacy Training Program.

The one day training program will increase workers' understanding of how they can provide better support for, and advocate on behalf of, children and young people. It will focus on developing workers' advocacy skills, identifying different types of advocacy, introducing effective advocacy strategies and will list organisations which advocate on behalf of children and young people. Information on health, education, law, justice, employment and training and housing will be included.

The trial program is expected to be delivered to teacher aides, child care workers and people from a variety of community organisations in 2003-04.

Volatile Substance Misuse

The Commission's report, *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*, released in September 2002, details a seven step community engagement strategy to deal with the issue of volatile substance misuse (VSM) at a local level.

In January 2003, the Commission held a forum to make retailers aware of the issues surrounding volatile substance misuse and to promote and encourage responsible retail practices.

The Commission, the Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council also worked with retailers' associations to develop a statewide resource which includes tips for retailers on the responsible display and sale of solvents.

Reactive

The nature of the Commission's work means we must respond to issues as they arise – whether in the public arena, or through our networks or services, including Complaints and Investigations, the Community Visitors and Employment Screening Services.

We faced some extremely challenging issues this financial year, not least, the allegations about abuse against children in foster care. In June 2003, the Commission was invited to oversee an audit into foster carer records in Queensland, conducted by independent child protection expert, Gwen Murray. The audit, and subsequent Crime and Misconduct Commission investigation are expected to be finalised next financial year.

"We must ensure all services to children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable, are accountable, and operate in a transparent way."

Outlook

I believe the experiences of the past financial year have highlighted the need for an independent authority to advocate for and monitor services to children and young people in a range of areas.

While the Commission already has some powers to address concerns on behalf of individuals it is clear there is a need for a strengthened systemic oversight role at least in the short to medium term.

We must ensure that all services to children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable, are accountable, and operate in a transparent way.

I look forward in the next twelve months to the ongoing development of the Commission's role, including the new responsibility for screening childcare workers from 1 September 2003.

We will continue to monitor emerging issues and respond to them as required.

Robin Sullivan

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Our history, our role



history + role

Our history

The Children's Commission, later to become the Commission for Children and Young People, was first established in 1996. The organisation originally operated under the provisions of the *Children's Commissioner and Children's Services Appeals Tribunal Act 1996* and the Commissioner reported to the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care. Administrative responsibility for the Commission was transferred to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in August 2000.



In February 2001, the new *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* was proclaimed, establishing the Commission as the most empowered independent statutory authority for children and young people in Australia, with enhanced scope, functions and powers.

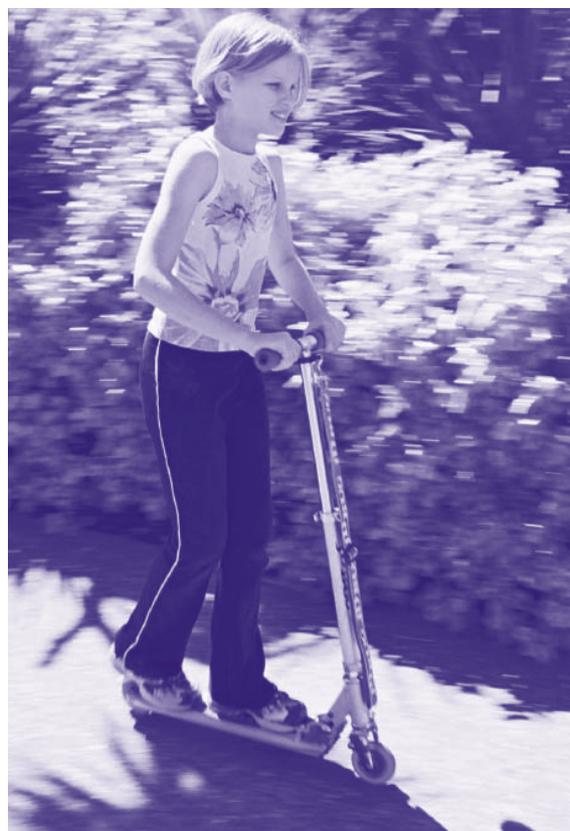
The Act provides the Commission with both ombudsman and advocacy functions and:

- embraces the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and
- positions the Commission as a lead agency in the area of protecting and promoting social investment in children and young people, both nationally and internationally.

Our role

The Commission's key functions include:

- advocating for the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people
- a statewide Community Visitor program to support services to children and young people in out-of-home care, including those in
 - detention centres
 - respite care facilities for children and young people with disabilities
 - mental health facilities, and
 - out-of-home residential care
- receiving and investigating complaints about services to children and young people
- monitoring and reviewing laws, policies and practices relevant to children and young people
- employment screening of people in specific categories of child-related employment
- establishing youth and other expert advisory committees for advice about specific issues related to children and young people, and
- research into issues impacting on children and young people.





Key outcome areas and highlights

Key outcome areas

The Commission's Strategic Plan identifies the following key outcome areas:

1. advocacy
2. monitoring laws, policies and practices
3. promoting evidence-based practice
4. safeguarding children and young people
5. excellence in leadership and management

Highlights – year at a glance

	Activity	Key outcome area	Date
Awards	The Employment Screening Services Unit won an award for Innovation for the Working with Children Check - Department of the Premier and Cabinet Awards 2002	excellence in leadership and management	July 2002
	2002 Public Sector Award for Child Protection awarded to Anthony Benedetti, Manager, Complaints and Investigations Unit	excellence in leadership and management; safeguarding children and young people	Oct 2002
	The Commission's first Annual Report on the first full year of operation under the <i>Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000</i> Commended in the 2001-02 Queensland Public Sector Annual Report Awards	excellence in leadership and management	Mar 2003
Achievements	Commissioner completed appointment as Expert Assistant Commissioner to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention Centres	monitoring laws, policies and practices	May 2003
	100,000th Working with Children Check	safeguarding children and young people	2003
	Commissioner continued as Co-chair of the 15th International ISPCAN Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, to be held in Brisbane in 2004. The Principal Communications Advisor appointed to co-chair the youth participation sub-committee	promoting evidence-based practice	ongoing



	Activity	Key outcome area	Date
Events	North Queensland Parliament sitting community engagement activities 'Students Speak Out' Breakfast	Advocacy	Sept 2002
	Children's Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner appointed State Ambassador Sponsored Cultural Awareness Day at Inala 	Advocacy	Oct 2002
	Australia Day Babies Event – Roma St Parklands	Advocacy	May 2003
	Youth Participation Research Forum – Ipswich	Advocacy	Feb 2003
Resources	<i>Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland</i> – Report released	promoting evidence-based practice and safeguarding children and young people	Sept 2002
	Retailers' Forum into responsible sale of solvents conducted		Jan 2003
	Finalised the <i>Working with Children Kit</i> and accompanying training program	promoting evidence-based practice and safeguarding children and young people	June 2003
	<i>The Wellbeing of Children and Young People in Queensland: A Snapshot</i>	monitoring laws, policies and practices	annual
Consultation	Consultation with community groups on Palm Island about a proposed youth and community centre	advocacy, monitoring laws, policies and practices and safeguarding children and young people	Aug/Oct 2002 Jan/Mar 2003
	Consultation with community groups on Thursday Island with Queensland Police Service and Anti-Discrimination Commission representatives	advocacy, monitoring laws, policies and practices and safeguarding children and young people	Mar 2003
	Established the Early Years Advisory Network to provide expert advice to the Commissioner on children's early years	monitoring laws, policies and practices	Apr 2003
	Conducted consultation in schools on the Commission's child-friendly journalism project	advocacy	May 2003
	Surveyed over 70 children and young people to get their views on a proposed Commission display	advocacy	June 2003
Special Projects	Established Child Labour Review Project	advocacy, monitoring laws, policies and practices and safeguarding children and young people	Apr 2003
	Established Advocacy Training Project	advocacy, and safeguarding children and young people	Apr 2003



Our People

Senior executive team

Robin Sullivan - Commissioner for Children and Young People

CertTch (KGTC), BA, B Ed (Qld), M Ed (JCU), D Univ (QUT), HonD Ed (CQU), FACE, FQIEA FACEL

Robin was appointed Children's Commissioner in April 1999 after a lengthy career in Education Queensland. She became the state's first married female state high school principal and in 1997, became the first female Deputy Director-General of Education. Her work in education has provided her with a wealth of practical experience, and a long-standing involvement in the education and welfare of disadvantaged children.

Robin is a member of the Child Protection Council, the Reference Group of the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission, and the Queensland Child Care Forum. She also contributes to a range of policy agendas at state and national level.

In 2002-03, Robin received an Honorary Doctorate of Education from Central Queensland University for her services to education, and was awarded the Centenary of Federation Medal for distinguished service and commitment to children and their welfare.

Barry Salmon - Executive Director

Dip T, BA, B Ed, M Ed St

Barry began his career as a primary teacher and has over 25 years of practical experience in supporting young people, teachers and administrators in Queensland schools. He worked as a Principal Policy Officer at Education Queensland, managing the Effective Learning and Teaching Unit and leading the development of the state's early intervention process for literacy and numeracy - the Year 2 Diagnostic Net - which is still in use today.

In 1996 Barry was appointed Assistant Director of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, managing the Preschool to Year 10 (P-10) curriculum development program, and successfully advocating for an outcomes-based approach to the curriculum.

In September 2001, Barry was appointed Executive Director of the Commission. He is responsible for the Commission's Employment Screening, Community Visitor and Complaints and Investigations functions. Barry is strongly committed to the view that strengthening the relationships surrounding children and young people is fundamental to their wellbeing.

From 21 October 2002 to 31 January 2003 Barry acted in the position of Commissioner.

Management team

Anthony Benedetti – Manager, Complaints and Investigations

B Soc Wk (Hons), M Pub Admin, LLB, Barrister-at-law, BA (Hons)

Anthony has managed the Commission's Complaints and Investigation Unit for the past 5½ years and has 19 years of professional experience working in the field of statutory child welfare and juvenile justice.

Before joining the Commission, Anthony worked in a variety of positions in the Department of Families, including Family Services Officer, Team Leader, Area Office Manager, Senior Crisis Care Worker, Principal Court Services Advisor and in various Senior Legal and Senior Policy Officer roles. Anthony has also worked for the Office of the Intellectually Disabled Citizens' Council and for the Office of the Director-General in the Department of Families.

Jody-Ann Gornick acted in the position of Manager, Complaints and Investigations from 13 April to 13 June 2003.

Sue Howard – Manager, Research

Cert Tch, BA, B Ed St, Grad Dip Lib St, M Phil
Sue has managed the Commission's Research Unit for four years, overseeing research and analysis of issues impacting on children and young people. Originally a secondary English and Maths teacher, she has taught in Queensland, Western Australia and South Africa, mostly in schools with disadvantaged students. With Education Queensland, Sue worked in the areas of teacher professional development, human relationships education and behaviour management.

Sue has developed and delivered Communication courses at Griffith University. She has also lectured in Human Development, Teaching-Learning, Policy and Professional Studies and supervised student teachers. In addition, she is a qualified librarian. Before joining the Commission, Sue worked with the Queensland School Curriculum Council, advising on curriculum development and standardised testing. Sue is committed to social justice issues and has undertaken voluntary work with Playgroup and P&C Associations and has sat on a wide range of committees.

Sue was seconded to Education Queensland in April 2003, with Julie Harcourt acting in the position of Manager, Research from 22 April to 30 June 2003.

Samantha Keegan - Principal Communications Advisor

B Bus Comn, M Bus (Comn), ATCL

Samantha started her career as a television and radio journalist, spending nearly ten years in the industry, including three as a Regional News Editor for the Seven Network and ABC Radio News. She has also worked as a freelance print journalist, as an editor for an on-line publishing company, and as weekend News Editor for 4BH Radio, Brisbane.

Samantha joined the public service in 1998, and has worked in marketing and communications roles in Emergency Services, Queensland Health and the Department of Families. She was appointed as the Commission's Principal Communications Advisor in March 2002, and is responsible for strategic communication planning, media advice, marketing and communications, corporate identity, publications and events.

Michelle Miller - Manager, Employment Screening Services

LLB, Barrister-at-law

Michelle is a Barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland. With over ten years' experience in the court system, she has an extensive knowledge of Queensland criminal law and rules of evidence. She was a Legal Officer with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and a Victim Support Liaison Officer responsible for supporting children and young people through the criminal justice system. Michelle has also acted as a Senior Project Officer in the Courts Research and Strategy Division, Department of Justice and the Attorney-General, providing advice on legal and policy issues.

Michelle joined the Commission as Manager, Employment Screening Services in 2001, and was responsible for establishing the Commission's Employment Screening Services Unit. She is responsible for managing the Working with Children Check.

Peter Noyes - Manager, Corporate Services

*Adv Cert Bus (Mgt), Assoc Dip Bus (Mgt), Grad
Cert Pub Sec Mgmt*

Peter has extensive experience in managing financial and corporate services in government in Queensland. He has worked as a Hospital Manager for Queensland Health in country hospitals around the state, and as Senior Finance and Administration Officer and Senior Purchasing Officer for Education Queensland. Most recently, Peter spent five years as Corporate Services Manager of the Queensland School Curriculum Council.

Peter was appointed as the Commission's Corporate Services Manager in April 2002 and oversees:

- financial and budget management and reporting
- human resource management
- workplace health and safety
- information management and technology
- facilities and asset management, and
- administrative support and security.

Dennis Palmer - Manager, Community Visitor program

Dennis began his career in a large newspaper's engineering department, before lecturing in a pilot pre-apprenticeship scheme for unemployed young people. He has also worked as a volunteer youth worker for the Uniting Church in South Australia, moving to Queensland to continue this work following study in the United States. Dennis worked in several roles at Education Queensland over 18 years, enhancing learning opportunities for young people in rural communities, managing a large conference venue and producing financial and workforce management reports. He joined the Commission in March 2001 to implement the expanded Community Visitors program.

As Manager of the Community Visitor program, Dennis is responsible for the recruitment, training and coordination of 24 Community Visitors throughout Queensland, identifying and liaising with visitable sites, and managing the Community Visitor reporting process.

Kathryn Mandla - Principal Policy Advisor LLB, BA

Kathryn was the Commission's Principal Policy Advisor for most of the financial year. She has experience in the social, legal and economic issues around child rights, education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, and administrative law. She provided advice on laws, policies and practices impacting on children and young people and coordinated submissions and briefs to Government and other agencies to ensure children and young people's interests are promoted and protected.

Kathryn was seconded to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in January 2003, and was appointed as Director of the Office for Women in June 2003. Her position was filled by Amanda Scarpato from 28 October 2002 to 31 January 2003, Natalie Giess from 3 February 2003 to 2 May 2003 and Allison Tait from 6 May to 30 June 2003.

Staff profile

At 30 June 2003, the Commission had 64 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, and an additional 12 FTE positions for temporary contractors to meet demand for employment screening services.

Of the Commission's 64 FTE staff, 22 FTEs are permanent positions and 44 FTEs are temporary.

These figures reflect the Commission's rapid growth since the proclamation of the new *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* in February 2001.

The increase in staffing reflects the expansion of the Working with Children Check to include the screening of volunteers from 1 May 2002, as well as a number of short-term projects, including the Working with Children Kit and Training Program, Child Advocacy Training Program, and Review of Child Labour Project.

The Commission's workforce at 30 June 2003 was made up of the positions listed on the following table, and represented in the Organisational Chart on page 16.

The table also shows the gender profile of the Commission at 30 June 2003.

Position	FTE	Male	Female
Commissioner for Children and Young People	1	-	1
Executive Director	1	1	-
Manager, Complaints and Investigations (1) Manager, Corporate Services (1) Manager, Research (1) Principal Policy Advisor (1) Manager, Employment Screening Services (1) Project Manager, Child Labour Review (1)	6	3	3
Principal Communications Advisor (1) Manager, Community Visitors (1) Project Manager, Working with Children Kit (1)	3	2	1
Senior Policy Officer (1) Senior Research/Project Officer (3.8) Senior Project Officer, Advocacy (0.8)	5.6	0.8	4.8
Executive Officer to the Commissioner (1) Project Officer, Database Development (1) Complaints and Investigations Officer (1.8) Community Visitors (4.2) Communications Officer (1) Graphic Designer (0.6)	9.6	1.7	7.9
Corporate Services Officer (1) Research Officer, Child Labour Review (1) Web Development Officer (0.4) Research Officer (2)	4.4	1.4	3
Corporate Services Officer (3) Program Support Officer (1) Complaints and Investigations Officer (0.2) Screening Officer (6)	10.2	1	9.2
Receptionist (1) Research Assistant (0.2) Administrative Officer (16)	17.2	4	13.2
Legal Officer (6)	6	3	3
	64.0	17.9	46.1

Women

- Women occupy 50% of senior executive positions compared with the Office of the Public Service Merit and Equity target of 25%
- Women also occupy 60% of middle management positions (A06-A08) compared with the target of 40%
- Of the 89 full-time and part-time temporary and permanent staff, 20 are male (22.5%) and 69 are female (77.5%)

Staff development

The Commission supports staff in enhancing their skills and competencies to meet the needs of clients. To achieve this, the Commission allocates funds for training and professional development as part of its budget process.

Throughout the year, a number of Commission staff attended training programs, seminars and conferences, both as participants and presenters representing the Commission.

Induction Program

In 2002-03, the Commission developed and implemented an induction program for new staff to the Commission. At the induction program staff are provided with a kit containing key policies and practices, and other organisational information such as the Code of Conduct. The program is intended to help new staff understand the work of the Commission and their rights and responsibilities as staff members.

Prevention of workplace bullying and harassment

During the financial year, the Commission provided training and information to staff on the prevention and reporting of workplace bullying and harassment.

System upgrade training

Staff received upgrade training to Microsoft Office XP, following the Commission's information technology network upgrade in September 2002.

Community Visitor training

The Commission also conducted two three-day training and development workshops for its Community Visitors. These workshops provided an important information sharing and networking

opportunity between the statewide Community Visitors, other Commission staff and a range of external agencies.

Indigenous Graduate Program

The Commission's Indigenous Graduate Program continued during the financial year, with the Indigenous Graduate completing her contract in April 2003. In her time with the Commission the graduate worked across the three program areas of Communications, Policy and Research.

Workforce management

Employment conditions

The staff of the Commission are employed under the *Public Service Act 1996*, excluding the Commissioner and Community Visitors, who are employed under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*. The Commission is also covered by the State Government Departments' Certified Agreement 2000.

Industrial relations representation

During the year, the Commission had both management and union representatives on the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Associated Agencies Consultative Committee, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Certified Agreement 2000.

New working hours arrangements

In September 2002, the Commissioner approved a revised Working Hours Arrangements policy. The new policy provides a commitment to effective flexible work practices to attract and retain employees and minimise absenteeism and staff replacement costs. The policy recognises the benefits of providing flexibility for staff to better balance work and family commitments, increase job satisfaction and stress reduction.

Flexible recruitment practices

The Commissioner also approved the adoption of the Office of the Public Service Commissioner Directive 01/03 on Recruitment and Selection which provides flexibility in the recruitment and selection of staff in certain circumstances. For example, this gives the Commissioner discretion to appoint officers to their existing position should it be reclassified without going through a merit selection process (subject to certain conditions).



Secondments

During the year, the Commission continued to support the activities of other departments by approving the secondment of Commission staff to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Education Queensland. The Commission also seconded staff from the Department of Families, Department of State Development, Department of Information, Innovation and Information Economy, Sport and Recreation Queensland, the Department of Public Works and Education Queensland.

Commitment to flexible working practices

The Commission remains committed to improving work practices for staff, especially in the areas of balancing work, family and other life commitments, and identifying flexible work practices in providing its services to clients.

Diversity

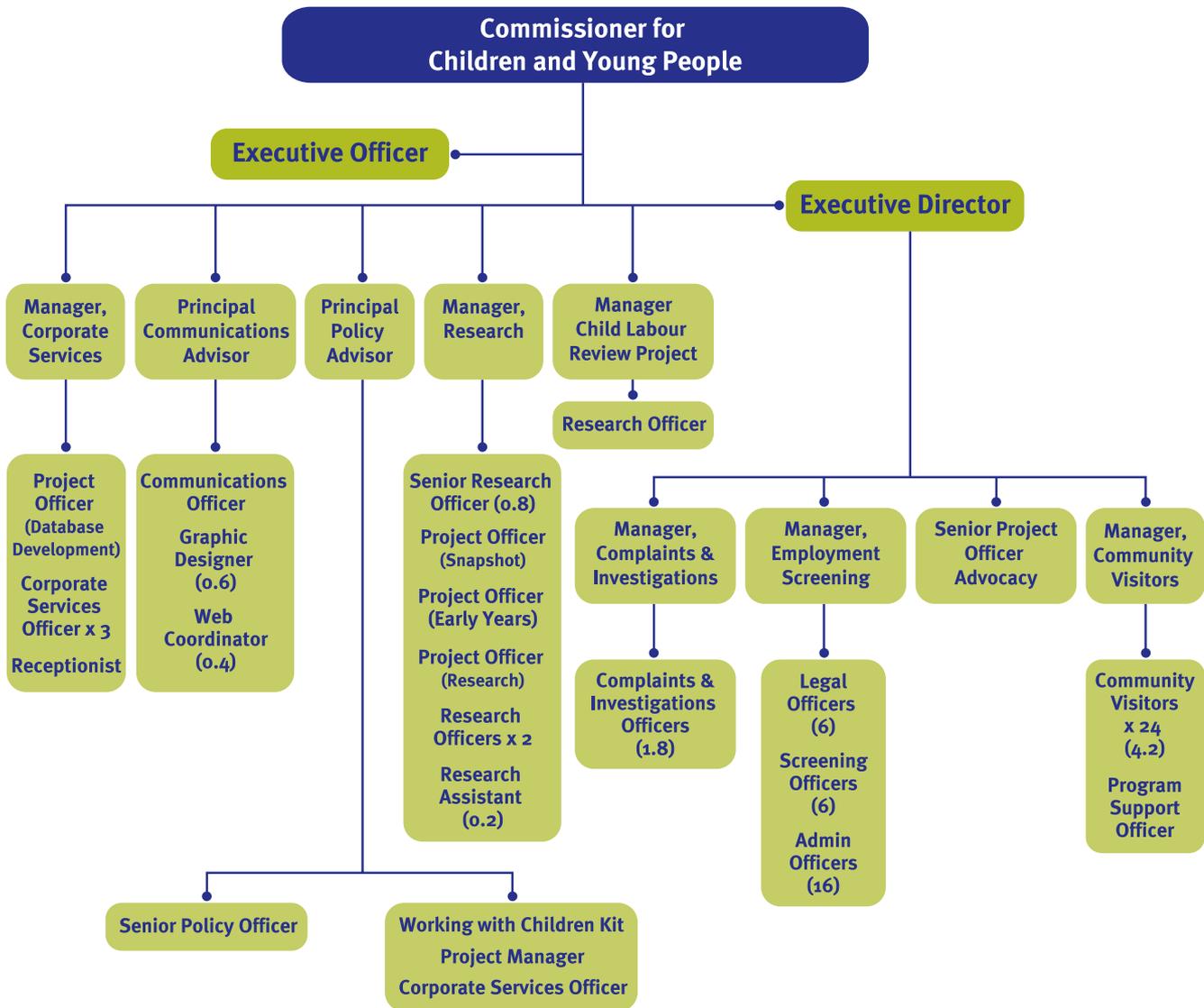
- Three staff of the Commission were Indigenous (two Community Visitors, one Graduate Trainee)
- Approximately 8.9% of staff are from a non-English speaking background (migrant or first-generation born in Australia)

Including children and young people

During the year, the Commission provided the opportunity for an Indigenous young person to sit on a selection panel for the selection of a person to fill the position of Senior Project Officer (Advocacy Training Project). Specific training in relation to shortlisting and interviewing techniques was provided to the young person by the Executive Director of the Commission.

Young people were also involved in a range of presentations and events hosted by the Commission.

Organisational chart



Corporate governance



governance

The Commission's corporate governance framework sets out how the Commission is "governed" to enable it to meet its goals and objectives.

Senior management group

The Commission's senior management group comprises the Commissioner, Executive Director and managers. The Commissioner is responsible for the overall leadership of the Commission.

All managers report directly to either the Commissioner or the Executive Director, who reports to the Commissioner. This group meets fortnightly to consider financial, staffing and managerial priorities, and closely monitors the operations, budget and strategic directions of the Commission.

Internal audit

The internal audits conducted into the Commission's business in 2002-03 aimed to review the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission's operations. These audits are central to improving accountability and operational efficiency.

During the financial year, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Audit and Evaluation Services Unit conducted an operational review of the Commission's Complaints and Investigations Unit and office security. In addition, recommendations arising from the 2001-02 operational reviews into the Community Visitor program and the Employment Screening Services Unit were implemented this financial year.

Outcomes

These reviews identified a number of recommendations, the majority of which have been implemented, leading to improvements in:

- office security
- processing of data
- reporting and data analysis, and
- accountability in information storage.

A number of recommendations require further resourcing and will be considered as part of the 2003-04 budget allocation process.

External audit

In September 2002, the Queensland Audit Office certified the Commission's 2001-02 financial statements without qualification. No issues requiring further consideration or action were raised.

Protecting personal information

Information Privacy

In accordance with the *Queensland Government's Information Standard 42 – Information Privacy*, the Commission continues to implement its

Information Privacy Plan which was developed in 2001-02. This plan establishes the framework for the collection and handling of personal information by the Commission and ensures the 11 privacy principles outlined in the Standard are appropriately managed.

A Website Privacy Statement was developed and placed on the Commission's website in the 2002-03 financial year, along with the Commission's

Privacy Plan, to inform stakeholders of the Commission's compliance with the Information Privacy Principles. The Commission expects to be privacy-compliant in accordance with the Government's Privacy Policy by September 2003.

"Client confidentiality will be safeguarded through improved management and storage of data as a result of the implementation of audit recommendations."

Privacy of data

Client confidentiality will be safeguarded through improved management and storage of data as a result of the implementation of audit recommendations.

Social and environmental responsibility

The Commission is aware of its responsibility to move towards triple bottom line reporting – that is, to report against its social and environmental performance, as well as its economic performance. The Commission has a commitment to ongoing improvements to both social and environmental responsibility, considering them integral to good corporate governance.

Social responsibility

The Commission supports a wide range of community-based programs which contribute to the social capital of the community. Throughout the 2002-03 financial year, the Commission provided opportunities for people to perform community service (through the Community Corrections program). The Commission also provided the opportunity for a number of participants in the Work for the Dole scheme to work at the Commission.

In addition, the Commission has provided opportunities for 3rd and 4th year students studying Human Services degrees to work in the Complaints and Investigations Unit.

The Commission's changes to its Working Hours Arrangements policy show its commitment to flexible work practices.

Environmental responsibility

Recycling

The Commission actively participates in recycling programs which contribute to the management and sustainability of the environment. Programs such as waste paper recycling and toner cartridge recycling have been implemented.

Reduction in paper use

The Commission has reviewed a number of work practices to determine where information technology can be better used to reduce paper and other resource use. In 2003-04, the Commission will implement new databases in the Complaints and Investigations Unit and Community Visitor program. The resulting reduction in reliance of records on paper, the proposed implementation of Crimtrak (an on-line database) for criminal history information checks, together with other process improvements will greatly reduce the use of this resource within the Commission.

Waste minimisation

The Commission's maintenance programs ensure that plant and equipment are properly maintained and operating efficiently to minimise waste.

Procurement policies

The Commission's procurement program for the use of local products takes into account environmental considerations.

Energy use

In the 2002-03 financial year, the Commission's energy consumption was fairly constant. It was not possible to monitor energy consumption trends between financial years due to the Commission's move to new premises in March 2002. However, energy costs will be monitored over the 2003-04 financial year for comparison data.

One area in which the Commission has been able to save energy is through the use of new technology, with upgraded equipment automatically switching to energy saving mode if left on.



Corporate governance enhancements

Improved records management

In January 2003, the Commission outsourced its storage and retrieval of Working with Children Check files to a specialist records management company. Approximately 100,000 files are now stored and recorded, with the Commission retrieving files as required.

New induction program

In 2002-03, the Commission initiated an induction program for new staff. (See staff development.) This program ensures employees are aware of the operations of the Commission, as well as their own accountability and responsibilities.

Improved financial reporting

Continued improvements were made to monthly financial reporting to the Commissioner in 2002-03. Monthly reports now include a broader range of financial information, as well as quarterly performance data against targets outlined in the Ministerial Portfolio Statements.

Legislative changes

In the 2002-03 financial year, the review of Part 6 of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* began as required by the legislation. An external team of officers from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet was appointed to review the Act, with assistance from the Commission's Executive Director and Managers, Policy and Employment Screening Services Unit. The review is expected to be finalised in the 2003-04 financial year.



Risk management and internal controls

Risk management

To adequately manage risks associated with the loss of physical assets and personal liability, the Commission's non-current assets and other risks such as public liability cover are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund, with premiums paid on a risk basis. In addition, the Commission pays premiums to WorkCover Queensland to meet its obligations for employee compensation.

Service level agreements

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet provides a range of corporate services support and systems to the Commission through a service level agreement outlining the services and service standards to be provided. These include:

- a range of financial and human resource management processing
- financial systems (SAP R/3)
- human resource management systems (Aurion)
- IT help desk and facilities management services
- library services
- facilities management and procurement support, and
- other support as required.

From 1 July 2003, the introduction of the Government's Shared Service Provider model means these services will be provided jointly by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Corporate Solutions Queensland and CorpTech. Service level agreements will be negotiated with the appropriate provider of these services.

Improved accountability

In 2002-03, the Commission began developing replacement databases for the Complaints and Investigations and Community Visitor programs. Much work was done on the databases in 2002-03, and they are expected to be fully implemented in 2003-04. The new databases will provide effective collection of data, assisting in improved reporting, identifying trends and supporting planning to inform the delivery of services.

In May 2003, the Commission began an internal review of the processes around the Working with Children Check. As 2002-03 was the first full year of implementation of employment screening of volunteers, employees and self-employed people in specified categories of work, the processing of applications increased by 340% from 2001-02. The review will consider the implementation of emerging technologies and enhancements to the processing model to decrease turnaround times for the issuing of suitability cards for those who pass the working with children check.

Training

In 2002-03, Commission staff attended Workplace Health and Safety Officer training as required under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*, and Workplace Rehabilitation Coordinator training as required under the *WorkCover Queensland Act 1996*.

Review of delegations

To adequately manage the financial and human resources of the Commission, a review was undertaken and appropriate amendments made to financial and human resource services delegations in 2002-03.

Review of performance measures

As 2001-02 was the first full year of operation under the Commission's new Act, performance measures are still being fine tuned. In the 2002-03 year, a number of key performance measures against which the Commission reports were changed, including the turnaround times for the processing of Working with Children Check applications.

Business continuity planning

Work on the Commission's Business Continuity/ Disaster Recovery Plan also began in 2002-03. The plan will outline the activities and management structure required to ensure the Commission remains operational during, and can quickly recover from, a disaster situation. This plan is expected to be finalised in 2003-04.

Asset management

In 2002-03, the Commission continued to upgrade its office equipment in accordance with the capital rollover scheme. In the course of the financial year, the Commission purchased new desktop computers, laptops, printers, digital photocopier and a data projector.

The Commission relies on external data links to access a number of technology resources. To ensure continuity of access, the existing microwave data link was upgraded to laser technology, and a redundant ISDN line was put in place as a back up should the laser link become non-operational.

The purchase and upgrade of the technology and data links ensures staff have access to reliable and efficient technology to support them in delivering consistent and reliable services to the Commission's clients.

"The purchase and upgrade of the technology and data links ensures staff have access to reliable and efficient technology to support them in delivering consistent and reliable services to the Commission's clients."

In 2003-04, the Commission's data storage infrastructure will be upgraded through the relocation of data housing to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Commission will continue to rollover assets, and will go live with the new Complaints Management and Community Visitor databases which began development in the 2002-03 financial year.

Code of conduct

The Commission places great value on public confidence in its operations and seeks to ensure that all employees exhibit high standards of ethical behaviour. The Commission's Code of Conduct was developed in 2001 and is continually reviewed to ensure its relevance. All staff are provided a copy of the Code of Conduct when they join the Commission.

Organisational capability - Communication



communication

Key functions

In 2002-03, the Commission's Communications Unit played a pivotal role in promoting laws, policies and practices which safeguard the wellbeing of Queensland's children and young people. The Unit partners with all other areas of the Commission to ensure projects meet their communication goals.

The Communications Unit is responsible for:

- expert advice on risk management and media matters
- setting strategic direction for the Commission's external communications
- overseeing the ongoing development of the Commission's corporate identity
- enhancing the Commission's profile to instil confidence in its role and functions

- using research to evaluate the needs of key clients - children and young people
- editing, layout and production of publications and corporate materials
- providing advice to managers on projects through communication planning, and
- redeveloping and managing the Commission's website.

Highlights

In the 2002-03 financial year, the Communications Unit's workload increased sharply, as demonstrated by the following performance indicators:

- 172 media contacts, up 81% on the 2001-02 financial year (95)
- exceeded the key performance indicator target of 130 media contacts and presentations by 90% - 247 in total
- increased involvement in events - up 300% from four in 2001-02
- 300% more publications edited, laid out and printed compared with 2001-02
- carried new corporate branding through new merchandise and materials
- redevelopment of the Commission's website
- organised community engagement activities and "Students Speak Out" breakfast at the North Queensland Sitting of Parliament
- began planning and organising the involvement in the RNA Show, Brisbane

"In the 2002-03 financial year, there was a 300% increase in the number of events with which the Commission was involved."

Commission's response to requests for interviews from members of the media. Fourteen media releases were issued in the course of the financial year and 60 written media responses provided to journalists.

In addition, there were 75 public presentations, such as speeches and key note addresses, written by Research Officers and edited by the Communications Unit, to a range of seminars, conferences and forums at state, national and international level. The Unit also prepared a number of speeches for the Commissioner.

In 2002-03, the Communications Unit wrote and issued 14 media releases on behalf of the Commission, including those on:

- the launch of *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*
- the release of the *Working with Children Kit* and training program
- North Queensland Parliament community engagement activities and 'Students Speak Out' breakfast

Events

In the 2002-03 financial year, there was a 300% increase in the number of events with which the Commission was involved.

These activities helped raise the profile of the Commission and awareness of its roles and functions among members of the public and government and non-government organisations.

Key events included:

Launch of the Research Unit's Issues Paper series

The Commission launched a new series of Issues Papers in August 2002, with the Communication Unit responsible for their design, layout and launch. The Issue Papers are short, concise reviews on critical issues relating to children and young people in Queensland. The launch was attended by key researchers from a range of tertiary institutions.

Outcomes and achievements

Exceeded media/presentation targets

The Communications Unit exceeded the key performance target of 130 presentations and media contacts in the 2002-03 financial year, achieving a figure of 247 in total. This included the Commission being featured in 172 media stories as a result of direct contact with the media in 2002-03, representing an 81% increase on media coverage in the 2001-02 financial year. The majority of these stories arose as a result of the

North Queensland Sitting of Parliament

The Commission conducted two key activities around the North Queensland Sitting of Parliament:

- *“Students Speak Out” breakfast*
5 September 2002

The breakfast attracted around 40 Parliamentarians and 100 North Queensland school students aged from 12 – 18 and gave students the opportunity to raise issues of importance to them directly with Members of Parliament. Food was prepared by the catering students at the Great Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE and served by the hospitality students.

- *North Queensland Parliament Community Engagement Activities 3-5 September 2002*

A range of activities were provided in the community engagement marquee, including a display and child-friendly brochures on the Commission’s functions. A ballot was conducted to find out what issues are of most importance to young people, with 2,259 students voting over the three days.

Children’s Week 2002

The Communications Unit sat on the 2002 Queensland Children’s Week Committee. As well as co-ordinating the Commissioner’s involvement in the launch of Children’s Week in Longreach in October 2002, the Unit co-ordinated a Cultural Sharing Day at Inala which offered children from preschool age to Year 3 the chance to take part in a range of culturally-based hands on activities, including craft, recognising bush tucker and dance.

International Women’s Day

On Saturday, 8 March 2003, the Commission took part in International Women’s Day celebrations at Southbank to celebrate women’s achievements. This was the first year the Commission has taken part, providing an opportunity to reach our target market of young women and girls. As well the Commission’s display, activities offered included free face painting, brochures about the Commission and giveaways.

Youth Services Expo

As part of celebrations for National Youth Week, from 5-13 April, the Commission took part in a Youth Services Expo ‘Burdekin to Brisneyland’ on 9 April 2003, organised by the Youth Housing Coalition. The Expo was held at City Hall to give young people information on services available in Brisbane. The Commission erected a display and provided promotional material and brochures.

Australia Day Babies Event

In May 2003, the Commissioner hosted the official annual ceremony recognising babies born on Australia Day in 2003 on behalf of the Twenty Sixers Club. Each child received a certificate to commemorate their birth on January 26.

Website redevelopment/activity

In the 2002-03 financial year, redevelopment of the Commission’s website began, to ensure it is more responsive to the needs of key stakeholders and clients, particularly children and young people. The site redevelopment was largely completed during the financial year. The new site will include a corporate component and a Kid’s Zone, incorporating interactive educational games, a bulletin board and hot links.

The Communications Unit was responsible for ongoing updates to the existing website. Hits on the site rose from 838,737 last financial year to 1,168,282 hits in 2002-03. The average number of hits per month for this financial year was 97,357. This represents a 500% increase on the number of hits experienced on the site in the 2000-01 financial year.

Publications

The Communications Unit oversaw the editing, printing and layout of 24 publications in 2002-03, a 300% increase on the number produced in 2001-02. In addition to the increase in volume, the publications developed a recognisable corporate identity. Publications edited, laid out and produced included:

- *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*
- a range of new corporate publications including a new corporate brochure and a brochure on the Commission’s Complaints and Investigations function
- *Working with Children Kit* and Training Participant’s Workbook

- Four issues of *Kidspeak* – the Commission’s quarterly newsletter
- design and layout of the Research Unit’s *Issues Papers 1 and 2*

Consultation

- community consultation activities were conducted with thousands of children and young people during the North Queensland Sitting of Parliament
- the Graduate Trainee was involved in community consultation with children on Palm Island during her placement with the Communications Unit
- extensive consultation was conducted with around 70 children and young people to ensure their views contributed to the display designed for them

Other

- continued the implementation of the Commission’s corporate identity
- created a new skyline display with two sets of skins – one designed to appeal to corporate stakeholders, the other to appeal to children and young people
- Principal Communications Advisor invited to Co-Chair the youth participation sub-committee for the 15th Annual Congress of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) in September 2004

Outlook

Events

RNA Show

The Communications Unit will co-ordinate the Commission’s involvement at the RNA Show in the Government Pavilion in August 2003. It will include a number of interactive activities for children and young people, with artwork, images and information used to communicate the Commission’s key roles and functions and tie in with the pavilion’s “get involved” message. This will include a “games arcade” offering interactive, educational computer games. There will also be a “shooting stars” basketball game, with giveaways of sample bags of Commission merchandise and brochures. In addition, those who shoot their star

through the hoop will have their photo taken looking out of a mural on the external wall of the stand.

Child Protection Week Activities

The Commission will be involved in a number of activities during Child Protection Week in September 2003. This will include representation at the Child Protection Week awards, involvement in a community day on the Gold Coast and visits to Mossman, Townsville and Cherbourg by the Commissioner. The Communications Unit will provide support in the form of staffing the display at events and writing and editing media releases and speeches required.

Children’s Week

The Commission’s involvement in Children’s Week will continue in 2003-04. The Communications Unit represents the Commission on the Children’s Week Organising Committee, and the Commissioner has been appointed State Patron. The Unit will write speeches, media releases and co-ordinate activities for the week, including a Cultural Sharing Day at Inala which will offer children from preschool age to Year 3 the chance to listen to a whole range of different storytelling activities.

Upcoming publications

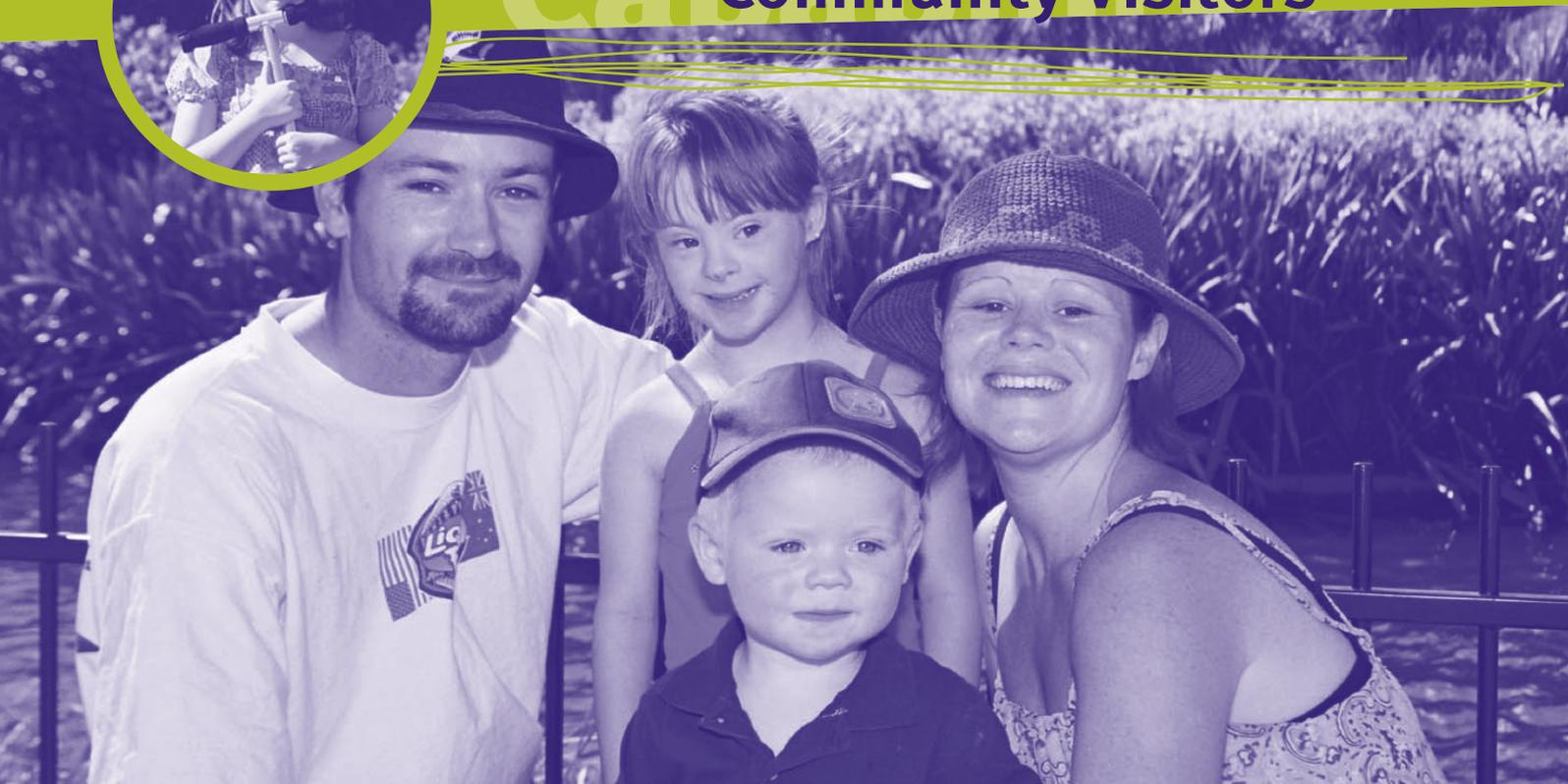
In 2003-04 the Communications Unit will edit, layout and produce a wide range of publications which support the Commission’s core business, including:

- the Advocacy Training Program Resource and Participant’s Workbook
- Child Labour Review Discussion Paper and Final Report
- Let’s Get Loud Report
- *The Wellbeing of Children and Young People in Queensland: a snapshot 2003*
- A ‘child friendly journalism’ guide

Website

In 2003-04, the Commission’s website redevelopment will be finalised, reflecting the Commission’s expanded role, and providing interactive, ‘user-friendly’ areas for children and young people.

Organisational capability - Community Visitors



community
visitors

Key functions

The financial year ended 30 June 2003 was a consolidation year of operation for the Commission's Community Visitor program which was established under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*. Under this Act, the program provides visitors to all residential facilities housing children and young people, including youth detention centres, respite care facilities for children with disabilities, and mental health facilities.

Community Visitors provide support to children and young people at these facilities and advocate on their behalf to help resolve their concerns. Under the Act, Community Visitors can enter and inspect facilities, talk to children or young people who wish to speak to them, and access documents held at the facilities relating to the residents or the service's operations.



Community Visitors continue to:

- build trusting and supportive relationships with children and young people in these facilities, as far as is possible
- advocate on their behalf by listening, giving voice to and helping resolve their concerns and grievances
- seek information about and ensure children's access to support services appropriate to their needs
- assess the adequacy of information given to the children about their rights
- inspect the sites and assess their appropriateness for the children's accommodation and the services they receive, ensuring they comply with relevant State and Commonwealth laws, policies and standards
- observe the treatment of children and young people, including how staff meet their needs
- assess the physical and emotional wellbeing of the children and young people
- assess whether detention centre programs adequately and appropriately prepare children and young people for release

Community Visitors are also expected to support the Commission's broader advocacy function by identifying issues relating to children and young people in their communities that do not fall within the scope of the Community Visitor functions. This enables the Commission to respond more effectively to the needs and interests of children:

- who are in, or may enter, out-of-home care or detention
- for whom there is no appropriate person to act on their behalf
- who are not able to protect their rights, interests or well being, or
- who are disadvantaged because of a disability, geographic isolation, homelessness or poverty.

Highlights

The highlights of the 2002-03 financial year include:

- a 17 per cent increase in the number of visitable sites from 159 to 187
- selecting, appointing and training six replacement Community Visitors
- initiating and trialing a mentoring program in conjunction with the Commission's Research Unit and VISE (Volunteers for Isolated Students' Education) for young people residing in supported accommodation services who are having difficulty coping with the demands of formal education
- further streamlining processes for receiving Community Visitors' reports and forwarding their recommendations to relevant service providers and Directors-General in a timely manner



Outcomes and achievements

In this twelve months, the Community Visitor program conducted 1,578 visits, 66 per cent outside of Brisbane. This is a 43 per cent increase on the number of visits conducted in the program's first full year of operation last financial year.

The Manager of the Community Visitor program succeeded in having the majority of issues addressed at the local level by the service provider or the relevant department.

The Commission received a positive response within the requested time to 74.6 per cent of all recommendations referred to Directors-General. Matters of concern brought to their attention included:

- requests from services for additional staffing or financial resources
- issues relating to the level of support provided to young people
- requests for building maintenance or modification
- issues relating to communication problems with government departments
- lack of suitable support facilities to cater for perceived demand
- requests for more appropriate placements for young people
- access to appropriate education for marginalised young people
- issues of personal safety for young people or service staff
- requests for more appropriate premises
- access to appropriate therapy for young people, and
- lack of facilitated family contact.

During the financial year, the Unit continued to monitor and advocate on several broader issues, including:

- the lack of accountability in some services, not currently required to be licensed, who accommodate marginalised or behaviourally challenging young people
- the placement of young people on youth justice or child protection orders with SAAP services

- the increasing number of homeless young people under 16 accommodated at SAAP services
- a lack of sufficient placement options to cater for demand in some areas
- the low standard of accommodation at some sites visited
- varying standards of care identified across the sites visited
- a lack of appropriate facilities to rehabilitate young people with volatile substance misuse, alcohol or other drug addictions, although it is pleasing to note that a new centre has been opened in Mackay

Departmental responses to Community Visitor report recommendations

(Commission letters dated 01/07/02 - 30/06/03)

Positive response received 74.6%		
Implemented	40	28.2%
Implementing action to address issue	39	27.5%
Noted, some assistance provided, other party to take action	18	12.7%
Will be implemented subject to funding availability	5	3.5%
Will be considered in budget	4	2.8%
No response or negative response received 23.9%		
No response received	18	12.7%
Recommended action not considered necessary	8	5.6%
Information leading to recommendation considered inaccurate	6	4.2%
No funding available	2	1.4%
Other party to instigate action	2	1.4%

Training and professional development of Community Visitors was conducted on two occasions during 2002-03. Specific sessions were provided in relation to:

- mental health issues for young people
- research into youth homelessness and substance abuse
- evaluation criteria for licensed premises
- update on the revised Juvenile Justice Act and Regulations
- communicating with young people with disabilities, and
- advocacy networks.

Outlook

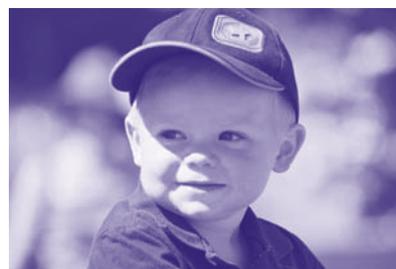
The Community Visitor program will continue to grow in 2003-04 as more visitable sites are identified. The program will continue to work to establish better relationships with government and non-government service providers to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people. This will include stronger links with the Adult Guardian.

The Commission will finalise the development of a new Community Visitor database in 2003-04 to enable more efficient and timely identification of issues, trends and responses at sites. Information booklets will be produced to explain to service providers, in simple terms, the role, functions and powers of Community Visitors.

A Community Visitor will be sponsored by the Commission to accompany two young people to the Ninth Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Sydney in the 2003-04 financial year.

There will also be an update of the Community Visitors' Procedures Manual in 2003-04.

Community Visitors will continue to refer formal complaints to the appropriate Units in the Commission as they arise to ensure positive outcomes for the young people involved. In addition, the Community Visitors will remain active participants in local networks.



Organisational capability - Complaints & Investigations



complaints +
investigations

Key functions

The Complaints and Investigations Unit is a highly responsive team that monitors, investigates and seeks to resolve complaints about services provided to children and young people by government and non-government agencies. The Unit's other key function is to advocate on behalf of children and young people, ensuring their needs are represented and considered.

Given the legislative function of the Unit, matters managed are extremely varied and complex. Officers engage with adults and children in highly sensitive and sometimes stressful situations

concerning the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people. To do this, staff have a well-developed practice framework which is based on clear child protection principles and have superior conflict resolution and assessment skills. The Unit has developed efficient work practices to ensure responses to concerns and complaints and resolutions with service providers are reached in a timely way.

Highlights

The Complaints and Investigations Unit had a perfect record in meeting performance targets regarding response to complaints in the 2002-03 financial year:

- follow up on complaints resolution in 28 days 100%
- assessments completed in 28 days 100%

Developmental work on the Complaints and Investigations Unit's new database for managing client records and data was initiated within the financial year, with the system expected to be completed and functional early in the 2003-04 financial year. The system will further enhance the ability of the Unit to monitor individual cases and general trends.

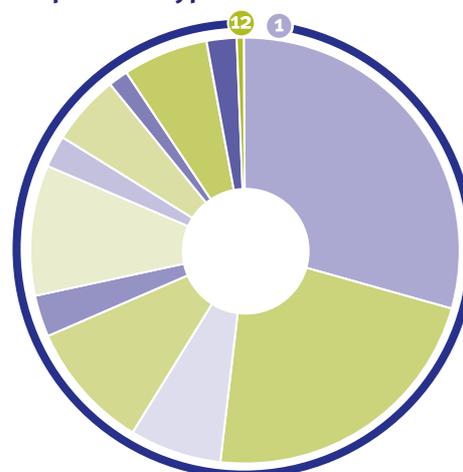
Outcomes and achievements

The Complaints and Investigations Unit received a total of 2,704 complaint enquiries in the 2002-03 financial year. Of the 2,596 calls and 108 email enquiries received, 330 cases were formally progressed through correspondence with relevant service providers.

There was a marginal decline (2.9%) in the number of telephone calls received last financial year (2,676). In every case, the Complaints and Investigations Unit staff provided information and advice to help resolve callers' concerns, and those concerns were followed up within 28 days. Fifty-six per cent of calls were from outside Brisbane.

Approximately 87% of all calls are managed through initial conflict management, counselling and referral advice. When callers remain dissatisfied and have engaged internal grievance mechanisms, the Commission intervenes to seek further resolution.

Total number of telephone enquiries by complainant type



- 1 Mother 29%
- 2 Father 22%
- 3 Young person 7%
- 4 Grandparent 10%
- 5 Relative 3%
- 6 Foster carer 10%
- 7 Teacher 3%
- 8 Community member 5%
- 9 Government agency 2%
- 10 Non-government agency 6%
- 11 Other 2%
- 12 Anon 1%

Formal correspondence to resolve a complaint by service provider or relevant authority (more than one authority may be notified)

Service provider	% 2002-03
Department of Families	43.0
Queensland Police Service	55.0
Non-government organisation	22.43
Crime and Misconduct Commission	9.70
Education Queensland	2.1
Queensland Health	0.6
Ombudsman	0.6
Disability Services Queensland	1.2
Australian Federal Police	1.2
Other	4.24

In responding to complaints, Complaints and Investigations Officers provide advice to try to resolve problems at the local level and encourage callers to use the service provider's existing complaints mechanisms. In most instances, this initial referral, advice and immediate management of the concerns defuses the situation and allows matters to be resolved without formal intervention.

The following table indicates that of the matters formally progressed by the Commission, the majority of cases are resolved satisfactorily and positive outcomes achieved.

Case Outcomes	%
Satisfactory result from formal referral and response from agency	44.8
Satisfactory result from referral to alternative complaint mechanism	27.0
Complaint resolved through other means	15.0
Not progressed as subject to legal or administrative investigation	8.6
Insufficient detail to progress case	3.9
Frivolous or vexatious allegations	0.7
Total	100.0

Nature of enquiries

The majority of enquiries to the Complaints and Investigations Unit related to services provided to children subject to child protection intervention. These enquiries included concerns relating to the actual services provided; decisions about placement and contact and reviewable decisions, including placement moves.

A large percentage of enquiries related to children at possible risk of harm or subjected to a criminal offence. These matters were immediately referred to the relevant agencies for investigation, ie. Department of Families and the Queensland Police Service.

Other enquiries were about broader advocacy issues such as accommodation, disability, financial matters and education. In the first instance, Complaints and Investigations Unit staff encouraged complainants to make use of agencies' internal complaints and grievance mechanisms. In cases where the matter remained unresolved it was dealt with under the Commission's legislation and progressed until a satisfactory resolution or outcome was achieved.

The Unit also advocated and acted on issues with a broader, systemic focus. This allowed the Commission to actively engage in community and social reform, highlighting the needs of children and young people and promoting their rights and interests.

The expanding nature of the Commission's work required the Unit to develop a protocol with the Employment Screening Services Unit (ESSU), under which matters can be investigated where there are concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. In these instances, the Unit works collaboratively with the Manager, ESSU to refer relevant matter to agencies, such as the Queensland Police Service, the Australian Federal Police or the Crime and Misconduct Commission for consideration.

Participation

The Complaints and Investigations Unit aims to develop community and government partnerships and work proactively toward improved complaints management. One way this is achieved is through participation and attendance at various workshops, forums and conferences. The Unit has always maintained strong links with peak agencies, foster care services and other interest groups such as grandparents' groups and youth forums. Strong links have also been developed with lead government agencies. For example, the Unit represents the Commission on the child death review subcommittee of the Coordinating Committee on Child Abuse and contributes to Family Services Officer training.

Outlook

In 2003-04 the Unit will focus on finalising and operationalising the new data management system.

The Unit aims to continue streamlining practices and case management frameworks to ensure consistency and responsiveness to issues raised by children and young people. In addition, streamlining communication between the Complaints and Investigations Unit and the Community Visitor program will ensure issues are adequately captured and resolved.

The Unit also hopes to engage directly with children and young people more often to progress issues.



Case study

In the 2002-03 year, the Commission's Complaints and Investigations Unit was contacted by a 17-year-old girl with concerns about the lack of support she was getting from a government service provider in helping her transition from living in care to independent living.

Her concerns included the fact that she was not being told about options to help her plan her future living arrangements, even though the placement she was in was only short term. She had a history of abuse, and there was no one in her family she could turn to for help. As a result, she felt isolated and uncertain about her future.

In response, the Commission contacted the service provider to clarify the girl's status with the agency, and the nature of services and support she was being offered.

The girl was consulted about the Commission's actions at each step, providing feedback on correspondence before it was forwarded to the service provider on her behalf to ensure it accurately reflected the issues she was facing.

The service provider assured the Commission that the level of casework services and support were adequate, and said the girl was taking part in identifying and planning for her needs.

Despite these assurances, the girl told the Commission she still felt unsupported and

unable to adequately plan for her future. The Commission followed up with the service provider again, advocating on her behalf, and seeking additional advice about the specific services being offered.

A strong caseplan was delivered, with the girl feeling included and consulted as a key decision maker. Her placement and transitional needs were met.

As a result of the Commission's advocacy, the girl remained in her preferred placement, with ongoing youth worker support and access to support. In addition, a financial package was developed in consultation with the girl to assist in her transition to adulthood.

The Commission also helped to negotiate a positive, meaningful relationship between the girl and the service provider to ensure her immediate and ongoing needs were considered. Her perceptions of the service provider changed, and, as a result she worked more cooperatively with support staff.

She also talked to the Commission about her experiences in long term alternative care, and said she wanted to share what she had learned by telling her story to other young people in care, perhaps influencing and connecting with them. The Commission helped her connect with a service which was keen to help – and she is still passionately 'telling her story' today.

Organisational capability - Corporate Services



corporate

Key functions

The Corporate Services Unit supports the work of the Commission by delivering effective resource management and quality support services.

The key functions of Corporate Services are:

- financial and budget management and reporting
- human resource management
- information management and technology
- facilities and asset management
- office reception and administrative support, and
- office and staff security.

The Commission has a range of corporate services systems and processes delivered by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet through a service level agreement. These include finance, human resources and information technology, which support the Corporate Services Unit's operations.

Highlights

The Corporate Services Unit ensured the Commission met the reporting requirements of statutory authorities during the financial year. Officers of the Unit developed and refined management strategies and systems to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, regulations, public sector directives and policies.

Working with Children Check process review

During the year, the Unit worked closely with the Manager of Employment Screening Services to develop a detailed costing model for the Working with Children Check using Activity Based Costing methodology. This model was reviewed and supported by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Queensland Treasury as a methodology for the costing and resource identification for the program, and was used to justify the subsequent allocation of funds in the mid-year budget review.

In 2002-03, the Corporate Services Unit began reviewing the processes followed in the Working with Children Check in conjunction with officers from the Employment Screening Services Unit. The Unit will begin screening workers under the *Child Care Act 2002* from 1 September 2003. The review has considered the steps involved in the process of employment screening, inherent risks and the possible introduction of technology and alternative ways to deliver services to ensure the timely processing of the increasingly large volume of applications for suitability cards.

Human resource management initiatives

The Corporate Services Unit developed and implemented two major human resource management initiatives during the financial year.

1. The Commissioner approved the adoption of a revised Working Hours Arrangements Policy which outlined the Commission's framework for staff. This policy includes a clear commitment to effective flexible work practices to attract and retain employees and minimise absenteeism and staff replacement costs. It also recognises the benefits of providing flexibility for staff to better balance work, family and other life commitments, increase job satisfaction and reduce stress. The Commission will use this policy as a framework for the development of supporting policies.
2. The Unit developed a staff induction program to be given to new employees. The induction program involves each new employee attending a short presentation about the Commission, its roles, functions and operating practices. Each new employee is also provided with a kit including relevant policies, the Commission's Code of Conduct and information to assist them in their role. Feedback on the induction program from new employees has been positive. It continues to be updated, taking into account staff feedback and other relevant information.

"The Corporate Services Unit supports the work of the Commission by delivering effective resource management and quality support services."

Outcomes and achievements

Enterprise bargaining

The Corporate Services Unit represented the Commission on the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Associated Agencies' Consultative Committee which monitors the implementation of the *Enterprise Bargaining Certified Agreement 2000*.

New technology

The Corporate Services Unit oversaw the upgrade of the Commission's information technology infrastructure in 2002-03 to better support the operations of the Commission. The Commission's data access link to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet was upgraded from microwave to laser technology, and a redundant ISDN link installed to ensure business continuity in the event of a failure of the laser link. The final stage of this upgrade will be completed in 2003-04.

2002-03 included a major upgrade and expansion of equipment to support the Commission's operations. This included the purchase of fifty computers, five laptop computers, five printers, one data projector, and two digital photocopier/printers.

Facilities

A number of minor works took place during the financial year to cater for the ongoing expansion of the Working with Children Check. This included the conversion and fit-out of various spaces in the Commission into operational work areas.

Financial Reporting

In the 2002-03 financial year, continued improvements were made to monthly financial reporting. Monthly reports now include a broader range of financial information, as well as quarterly performance against targets outlined in the Ministerial Portfolio Statements.

Audit response

Corporate Services continued to implement the recommendations of the Audit and Evaluation Services reviews of the Community Visitor program, Complaints and Investigations program, and office security in 2002-03.

Outlook

In the 2003-04 financial year, Corporate Services will:

- review human resource management policies
- continue to review and refine budget development, monitoring and reporting systems and processes to ensure the financial resources of the Commission are appropriately managed
- support the redevelopment and implementation of Commission databases with upgraded information technology structure, including Employment Screening and new databases in the Community Visitor program and Complaints and Investigations Unit, to enable better recording and collection of data to support the activities of the Commission
- develop and implement the Commission's Business Continuity Plan which will outline the activities required to ensure the Commission remains operational throughout a disaster and can quickly recover afterwards
- finalise implementing recommendations arising from Audit and Evaluation Services reviews of Employment Screening Services, Complaints and Investigations and office safety and security
- finalise the process review of the Working With Children Check
- finalise the training and appointment of Workplace Health and Safety Officer and Workplace Rehabilitation Coordinator in accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* and the *Work Cover Queensland Act 1996* respectively
- finalise negotiations for extra office accommodation, the subsequent fit-out and relocation of staff to meet expanded demand for Employment Screening Services

Organisational capability - Employment Screening Services



employment
screening

Key functions

In Queensland, the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* requires those who work with children (under 18 years of age) in certain categories of paid or voluntary employment, or those who operate child-related businesses, to undergo a Working with Children Check.

The Working with Children Check is a comprehensive assessment of a person's suitability to work with children based on their criminal history, if any. Those found suitable to work with children and young people following this comprehensive criminal history check are issued with a blue card, which they must produce to be able to work with children in Queensland.

Blue cards have been required for new paid employees since 1 May 2001, for self-employed people since 1 February 2002, and for volunteers since 1 May 2002. From 1 September 2003 the check will expand to include all child care services.

The check is required for the following categories of child-related employment:

- residential facilities
- school boarding houses
- school employees other than teachers
- churches, clubs and associations involving children
- counselling and support services, and
- private teaching, coaching or tutoring.

At 30 June 2003, the Employment Screening Services Unit had a staff of 29 FTE staff (at 30 June 2003), including a core establishment of 9 FTE staff and 20 temporary staff, engaged to meet demand for screening from an estimated 100,000 volunteers. Staff numbers are supplemented by the use of temporary agency staff as the need arises.

Highlights

Queensland was the first state in Australia to introduce screening of volunteers who work with children and young people (in 2001-02). Over the 2002-03 financial year, volunteers and the organisations for which they work have increasingly accepted the blue card as an important child protection strategy. The Commission has seen these organisations move to ensure that all members involved in activities with children or young people hold a blue card.

Queensland's blue card system has been so successful it is now being considered for adoption in other jurisdictions in Australia.

The Commission has adopted a continuous improvement approach to the operations of the Employment Screening Services Unit. This has included negotiating improved turnaround times with external agencies which provide criminal history information, reviewing process and staffing levels in the Unit and streamlining resource allocation strategies.

The Commission is also looking at screening and licensing processes of other agencies in Queensland and interstate, with a view to adopting best practice in the use of technology, workflows and client communication.

Outcomes and achievements

From 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003, 105,588 blue suitability cards were issued. Of these:

- 18,694 were issued to new paid employees
- 6,897 were issued to self-employed people carrying on certain child-related businesses
- 79,994 were issued to volunteers, and
- three were issued to current employees at the request of their employers who had concerns about their suitability.

The breakdown of cards issued by category is:

- residential facilities – 2,267
- school boarding houses – 255
- school employees other than teachers – 32,474
- churches, clubs and associations involving children – 48,845
- counselling and support services – 13,033
- private teaching, coaching or tutoring – 8,714

In 2002-03, 318 applicants renewed their suitability notices after two years.

In 2002-03, 26 applicants were issued with negative notices which prohibit them from working with children.

126 applicants withdrew their applications from the process after being challenged by the Commission to provide more information. These people cannot work in child-related employment. Of these, 84 applicants decided not to proceed when further information was sought by the Commission about their criminal histories. This figure illustrates the deterrent effect on those not suitable to work with children and young people.

In addition to the applications withdrawn as a result of being challenged, 1,754 applications were withdrawn by the Commission after applicants provided insufficient identification, no

“Queensland’s blue card system has been so successful it is now being considered for adoption in other jurisdictions in Australia.”

further documentation was provided as requested by the Commission, or for other reasons.

Nine applicants appealed against the Commissioner's decision to issue negative notices in 2002-03. Only one appeal succeeded, resulting in the decision to issue a negative notice being overturned. These figures support the thoroughness of the Commission's processes in assessing people's suitability to work with children.

Over the year, the Commission provided over 9,000 information kits to relevant organisations and individuals requiring screening. The figures indicate the continuing strong interest in this important child protection strategy.

Review of Part 6 of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*

The Working with Children Check came into effect on 1 May 2001 following passage of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (Qld)*. Part 6 of the Act relates to employment screening for certain child-related employment and child-related business.

Section 164 of the Act requires a review of Part 6 be undertaken within two years of the introduction of the employment screening provisions. The review began on 1 May 2003, and is being conducted by officers of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in consultation with the Commission.

The review is an opportunity for community members to express their views about the blue card. As community expectations around child protection issues may have changed since the introduction of the Commission's legislation, the review provides an opportunity to consider other categories of people and businesses that should be subject to a Working with Children Check.

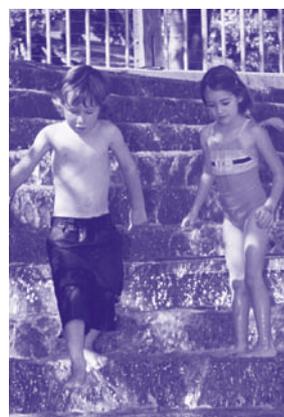
A discussion paper will provide the opportunity for members of the public to make submissions.

Outlook

The Employment Screening Services Unit will continue to review and refine its procedures and systems in 2003-04 to enable continuous improvement in its standard of client service. A review of the processes, workflows and staffing levels in the Unit will be undertaken. The Commission is also looking at the possibility of operating a paperless office and electronically obtaining criminal history searches to improve timeliness and cost efficiency.

With the commencement of the screening of all child care services on 1 September 2003, up to 20 additional staff are expected to be employed in the 2003-04 financial year.

The Employment Screening Services Unit will continue to improve the exchange of information with the Queensland Police Service about changes in the criminal history of those holding a current suitability card, or those who have applied for a suitability card to work in child-related employment.



Organisational capability - Policy



policy

Key functions

Under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* the Commission monitors and reviews laws, policies and practices that affect the delivery of services to children and young people, or otherwise impact on children and young people. The Policy Unit helps ensure these functions are met and assists with the promotion of laws, policies and practices that uphold the principles underlying this Act. To achieve this, the Policy Unit monitors a broad range of areas – including health, housing, child protection, education, youth justice and training, transport and employment.

The Policy Unit:

- provides submissions on legislative or policy reforms to Ministers, parliamentary committees, government departments and agencies and negotiates improved outcomes for children and young people
- provides briefings on issues that impact on children and young people
- sits on government and non-government working parties, committees and taskforces and advocacy committees
- identifies emerging issues concerning children and young people and advocates for appropriate responses from the government and the community
- monitors and analyses policy trends and innovations in relation to services and programs for children and young people both in Queensland and in other jurisdictions
- disseminates the Commission's position on issues affecting children and young people in collaboration with the Research and Communications Units, to media and key stakeholders

"The Policy Unit provides advice on laws, policies and practices that impact on children and young people on the basis of what is in the best interests of the child or young person."

The Policy Unit provides advice on laws, policies and practices that impact on children and young people on the basis of what is in the best interest of the child or young person.

The Policy Unit is also responsible for administering Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation and privacy matters, and managing the Commission's legislation, cabinet matters and parliamentary briefs.

Highlights

Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland

In 2002-03, the Policy Unit played a critical role in raising the profile of volatile substance misuse ('chroming') as an issue for Queensland's children and young people. The Unit developed a report: *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland* in September 2002. It outlines a community engagement strategy for dealing with this issue at the local level, which has been well received by both government and communities.

Following the release of the report, a working group was formed to develop a whole-of-government response to the issue of volatile substance misuse. The Policy Unit is represented on the working group, and the Commission's community engagement strategy is expected to inform the response.

The Commission has also presented papers on the strategy at several key conferences including the Youth Justice Conference and the State Youth Affairs Conference. In addition, the Policy Unit organised a retailers' forum in January 2003 to encourage retailers to adopt responsible retail practices for the sale of solvents. As a result, peak retail associations agreed to work with the Commission, the Queensland Government and the Brisbane City Council to develop a resource to help retailers address volatile substance misuse in their communities.

Working with Children Kit

The Commission developed the *Working with Children Kit* and training program in 2002-03 to help organisations and community groups provide safe and friendly environments for children and young people. The kit complements the Commission's Working with Children Check.

An Advisory Committee established to provide guidance on the development of the kit and training included representatives from government, the child protection sector, peak community organisations that work with children, churches, and sport and recreation groups.

The kit covers topics such as organisational policies and procedures, codes of conduct, recruitment, training, supervision and management of staff and volunteers, and appropriate ways to respond to disclosures of abuse and other inappropriate conduct.

Outcomes and achievements

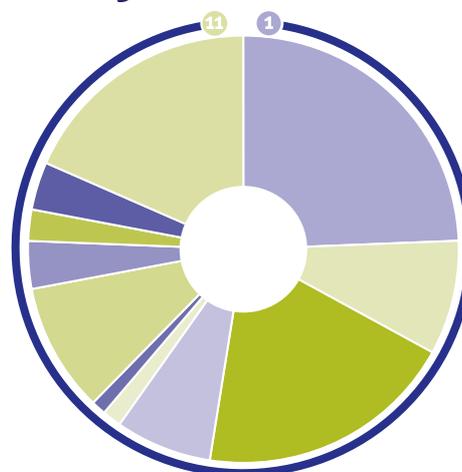
In 2002-03, the Policy Unit coordinated 154 briefs and submissions, including:

- 82 submissions and briefings to the Premier, Ministers, government departments and agencies on laws, policies and practices impacting on children and young people – a 31 per cent increase on the 64 submissions made last financial year
- 72 briefings for the Premier and Parliament on the Commission's operations – a 20 per cent increase on the 60 written last financial year

Major submissions to government departments in 2002-03 including those on:

- Final Report of the Forde Implementation Monitoring Committee
- Education and Training Reforms for the Future
- Department of Industrial Relations' Review of Work and Family
- Review of adoption legislation
- Review of the law of negligence and civil liability
- Review of section 63 of the *Health Services Act 1991*
- Education Queensland's review of home schooling
- Amendments to the *Juvenile Justice Regulation 1993*
- *Evidence (Protection of Children) Bill 2003*
- Senate Inquiry into Institutional Care
- Disability Services Queensland Carer Recognition Policy
- Education Queensland's Student Protection Inter-agency Working Party Report
- Ministerial Inquiry into Sexual Abuse in Schools
- Education Queensland's Safety in Schools Reforms
- Child Protection Strategic Framework
- Child Protection – International Measures
- Freedom of Information Review
- Sport Drug Testing

Number of submissions made in 2002-2003



Submissions, 2002-03

- 1 Child protection (20)
- 2 Employment screening (7)
- 3 Health (16)
- 4 Education (6)
- 5 Child care (1)
- 6 Indigenous/multi-cultural (1)
- 7 Youth justice/legal (8)
- 8 Employment (3)
- 9 Youth affairs (2)
- 10 National welfare, child protection issues (3)
- 11 Other eg sport, housing, young carers (15)

In addition, the Policy Unit advocated for children and young people by participating in 18 governmental and non-governmental committees during the 2002-03 financial year.

Throughout 2002-03 the Unit coordinated the following groups:

- Working with Children Kit Advisory Group
- Children of Prisoners Advocacy Group

Outlook

The Policy Unit's activities are likely to increase in the 2003-04 financial year as the profile of the Commission and awareness of the Commission's activities and functions continues to grow. From next financial year, it is expected to be a requirement for agencies to consult with the Commission in the developmental stages of any policy or legislation impacting on children or young people.

The Unit will continue to work with local authorities and community groups, retailers and youth advocacy groups to support the establishment of local initiatives to address volatile substance misuse.

Training to support the Working with Children Kit will continue to be delivered by the Commission across Queensland in 2003-04.

The Unit will also coordinate and support the implementation of recommendations from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet review of Part 6 of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* relating to employment screening.

In addition, it will play a key role in any Commission involvement in the CMC Inquiry into the Queensland child protection system and its subsequent outcomes.



Organisational capability - Research



research

Key functions

The Research Unit analyses, coordinates, conducts and promotes research to inform decisions and improve the quality of services to children and young people in Queensland. The information obtained and relationships developed from these activities are used to further understanding of issues relating to children and young people in a variety of ways.

The Unit produces papers and reports on a wide range of topics and issues which relate to children and young people. These are shared with stakeholders with diverse interests. The Unit identifies trends in research, issues, and practices.

This enables it to provide the Commissioner and other government and non-government organisations and individuals with high quality information and advice.

The Research Unit:

- analyses reports, research and data to identify trends that impact on the wellbeing of Queensland children and young people
- initiates, identifies and/or promotes networks and alliances in research with academic, non-government and government partners
- seeks and reports the views of children and young people on a range of issues
- enables the Commission to:
 - provide high quality, current and well-informed debate or comment on issues relating to children and young people
 - disseminate information to influence theory, research, and the attitudes, policies and practices of government, service providers, academia and the general community
 - contribute to publications at local, state, national and international levels
 - provide advice to other government and non-government agencies on draft documents, policies or practices relating to children and young people.

Highlights

In the 2002-03 financial year, the Research Unit initiated a number of key projects which included:

Generating Futures: Engagement, Participation and Young People Forum

In February 2003, the Commission held the Generating Futures: Engagement, Participation and Young People Forum at the Ipswich Campus of the University of Queensland. This forum promoted the right of young people to participate actively in shaping the communities in which they live – the family, school, and the broader community – including influencing government processes.

Early Years Strategic Network

In 2003 the Commission established the Early Years Strategic Network through its Early Years Project. The Network is designed to encourage collaboration and information sharing across government and non-government agencies which are involved in working with children from birth to eight years and their families.

The first meeting brought together over 80 senior people associated with early childhood policy development, research, child protection, family support, education, childcare, health and mental health. Representatives came from universities, professional groups, key government departments, non-government organisations, and peak bodies.

Early Years Advisory Group

An Early Years Advisory Group was established following the first Early Years Strategic Network meeting. This group is the Commission's peak consultancy body for identifying and prioritising issues relating to the early years. It is made up of around 30 members, representing health, education, child protection, family support, child care, mental health, Indigenous issues, disability and linguistically and culturally diverse groups and children's rights advocates.

Input to the National Agenda for Early Childhood

The Research Unit co-ordinated the Commission's submission to the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) on the development of the National Agenda for Early Childhood. Input from the Early Years Strategic Network was analysed and informed the Commission's submission and the Commissioner's input at the national roundtable discussion on the National Agenda for Early Childhood.





Issues Paper series

In 2002-03, the Commission produced the second paper in its new Issues Paper series. Queensland researchers, Fagan and Najman based the paper, *The Gendered and Long-Term Relationship Between Family Practices and Children's Aggression and Delinquency*, on information from the Mater-University Study of Pregnancy (MUSP). It identifies family practices that increase children's aggression and delinquency and discusses the implications for prevention programs.

Coordination of whole-of-government responses for the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children

The Research Unit co-ordinates the responses from all Queensland Government departments for the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children (LSAC). This survey, also called *Growing Up in Australia*, is a key research initiative designed to provide information about the influences on children's developmental pathways. This study will collect data from two different age cohorts of Australian children over eight years.

Consultant on the evaluation of Future Families Program

A Research Officer has been appointed as consultant evaluator for the evaluation of Queensland Health's *Future Families Program*. The *Future Families Program* is a collaborative care initiative of the Child and Youth Mental Health Service of the Royal Children's Hospital and Health Service District. It is designed to help families with infants and young children who have complex needs in the Brisbane North and Pine Rivers districts. This Officer will provide advice on the design and conduct of the evaluation and hold focus groups with Queensland Health employees.

Outcomes and achievements

In the 2002-03 financial year, the Unit's key outcomes included:

- 43 speeches/papers presented by the Commissioner, the Executive Director and other staff
- 116 internal papers providing advice and briefings on a range of topics for the Commissioner, Executive Director, and the Policy and Communications Units
- attendance at 88 meetings with agencies, groups and individuals in relation to issues associated with children and young people
- 16 responses to external requests from individuals for information
- seven responses to media queries
- four major submissions to other agencies
- membership of 14 interagency groups related to issues affecting children and young people

In April 2003 staff from the Research Unit attended the *Which Way You Mob!* Youth Policy Development Forum in Cairns to meet with and consult Indigenous young people on a range of issues. Contacts made during this visit will help the Commission access broader networks of Indigenous young people in the future to research their views on youth policy and other matters affecting them.

Outlook

Children and Young People in Queensland: a Snapshot 2003

The success of the Commission's first Snapshot report produced in 2002 has encouraged the Commission to work towards a 2003 Snapshot. The Snapshot provides a comprehensive view of children and young people in Queensland. The report is due for release towards the end of 2003. It will incorporate census and survey data as well as information from a range of government agencies providing services such as health, safety, education and housing to children and young people.

A Focus on Fathering

The Research Unit is awaiting publication of its book on fathering by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). *A Focus on Fathering* is the culmination of a series of activities by the Research Unit over several years, designed to recognise and acknowledge the important role fathers play in their children's lives. Commission staff contributed three of the book's chapters and played a significant role in editing other chapters. The book will be launched around February 2004.

Early years project

An Early Years Research Forum is expected to be held in early 2004 to address the issues and priorities identified by the Early Years Advisory Group and the Early Years Strategic Network. The Forum will further the Commission's capacity to provide expert advice and organisation in this area.

"The Research Unit co-ordinates the responses from all Queensland Government departments for the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children (LSAC)."

VISE mentoring project

The Unit will coordinate an educational mentoring support project for young people in accommodation services, provided it can attract enough volunteers. The project is designed to allow young people to request, through their Community Visitor, educational support in any school subject area through a volunteer mentor.

The educational support is provided through the Volunteers for Isolated Students' Education (VISE) program. The unit hopes to expand the project following a pilot in early 2003-04.

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth

In 2003-04 the Commission for Children and Young People will be assisting the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) to host Queensland consultations during the development phase of the ARACY Research Agenda. The Alliance is a national initiative involving researchers, policy-makers and practitioners which promotes the development and application of evidence based knowledge through collaboration to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people.



Other activities



activities

Our relationships

Commission staff represented the organisation on a wide range of committees, working groups and other forums in the 2002-03 financial year including:

- Abused Child Trust Research Committee
- Alcohol Action Plan Working Group
- Alternative Care Research Reference Group
- Alternative Care Steering Committee
- Alternative Education Working Party
- Australasian Evaluation Society, Queensland Committee

- Child Care Forum
- Child Protection Council
- Child Protection Strategic Framework, Policy Action Team
- Child Protection Partners Forum
- Child Protection Week Committee
- Children's Issues Committee – Queensland Law Society
- Children's Week Committee
- Coalition for Australia's Children
- Community Capacity Building Cluster Group
- Community Renewal - Early Childhood Advisory Group
- Community Renewal Palm Island Steering Committee
- Community Renewal Planning and Resource Allocation Group
- Coordinating Committee on Child Abuse - Child Deaths Review Subcommittee
- Creche and Kindergarten Association, Board of Management
- Crime Prevention Senior Officers Group
- Crime and Misconduct Commission Reference Group
- Crime Statistics Network
- Department of Families Lighthouse Project (Inhalants) Steering Committee
- Detention of Children in Watchhouses Liaison Committee
- Disability Services Queensland's Carer Recognition Policy Interdepartmental Committee
- Early Intervention Network, Peak Care
- Educating Children and Young People in Care Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee
- Education Queensland – Resourcing Instrument Steering Committee
- Education Queensland Student Protection Policy Working Party
- Evaluation Reference Committee for the Juvenile Justice Act
- Future of Accommodation and Support
- Government Agencies Coordinating Group – Schoolies Week 2003
- Home Schooling Reference Group
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Inquiry into Refugee Children in Refugee Detention
- Interagency Youth Issues Forum
- Interdepartmental Committee on Multicultural Affairs
- ISPCAN Congress 2004 – Co-Chair of Organising Committee and Youth Participation Sub-committee
- Joint Complaints Agency Communication Officers
- Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance - Advisory Board
- Managers' Forum Youth Detention Centres
- Ministerial Subcommittee on Young People's Transitions – Department of Employment and Training
- Multicultural Affairs Interdepartmental Working Party
- NIFTeY Board of Directors
- Police and Young People Support Network Steering Committee
- Pregnant and Parenting Young Women's Working Group
- Privacy Contact Officers Network
- Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission's Youth Advisory Committee
- Queensland Arts Accreditation Council
- Queensland Drug Coordinating Committee
- QUT Faculty of Education Academic Board
- QUT Planned Giving Committee
- Reference committee for “profile of Young Australians”
- Review of Adoption Legislation Reference Group
- Review of Part 6 of the CCYP Act, Steering Committee
- Senior Officers' Working Group for the Ministerial Taskforce on Sexual Abuse in Schools
- Senior policy officers group contributing to the Human Services CEO Project - Enhanced Collaboration in the Management of Client Information
- State Youth Advisory Council
- Student Protection in non-State Schools Working Party



Community engagement

In 2002-03, the Commission was involved in a range of projects involving community engagement throughout the state. These activities included:

- North Queensland sitting of Parliament, Townsville Student ballot on “What’s most important to you?” and “Students Speak Out” breakfast
 - Consultation and workshops with Indigenous children and young people about a new community centre proposed for Palm Island
 - Community consultation on Thursday Island around child welfare issues
 - Consultation with retailers on responsible retail practices for the sale of solvents following the release of the Commission’s report – *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*
 - Community consultation in Rockhampton and Townsville about the Commission’s community engagement strategy proposed in the report *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*
 - Consultation with a wide range of government and non-government organisations in developing the second annual Snapshot report – *The Wellbeing of Children and Young People in Queensland: a snapshot 2002*
 - Consultation with peak agencies to develop an Advocacy training package
 - Consultation with relevant stakeholders during development of the *Working with Children Kit*
 - Early Years Advisory Group and Strategic Network
 - Consultation for National Agenda for the Early Years
 - Generating Futures: Engagement, Participation and Young People Forum at the Ipswich Campus of the University of Queensland
- UNICEF National Taskforce on Child Rights
 - Volatile Substance Misuse Steering Group
 - Working Group on Treatment, Monitoring and Supervision of Child Sex Offenders
 - Young Workers Advisory Service Network
 - Youth Alcohol and Drug Sub-Committee of the Queensland Drug Coordinating Committee
 - Youth Justice Coalition

Other information



information

Statutory responsibilities

Legislation the Commission is responsible for administering:

- *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*

Legislation of key relevance to the Commission include:

- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Children's Services Appeals Tribunal Act 1996*
- *Mental Health Act 2000*
- *Juvenile Justice Act 1992*

Overseas travel

Date	Name of Officer and Position	Destination	Reason for Travel	Agency cost	Contribution from other agencies or sources
July 2002	Robin Sullivan, Commissioner	Denver, Colorado, USA	As Co-chair of the Organising Committee to promote the 19th International Congress for the International Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) in 2004 to delegates of the 2002 ISPCAN Congress	\$743	\$5,210 (paid by ISPCAN)

Freedom of information

In 2002-03, the Commission received one Freedom of Information (FOI) request for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*. The Commission did not grant complete access to the requested material but released fifteen partial documents under the personal affairs exemption s.44(1) of the Act.

The applicant subsequently applied for an internal review of the decision not to grant complete access to the documents, and the decision was upheld.

Information privacy

The Commission continues to implement its Information Privacy Plan which was developed in 2001-02 in accordance with the Queensland government's Information Standard 42 – Information Privacy Principles.

The Commission's Privacy Plan is maintained on the Commission's website to inform stakeholders of the Commission's compliance with the Information Privacy Principles.

As a result of its current privacy practices, the Commission will be privacy-compliant in accordance with the government's Privacy Policy by September 2003.

Whistleblowers

The Commission for Children and Young People received no disclosures from whistleblowers under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1994* during the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003.

Consultancies

The Commission did not make any payments to Consultants during the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003.

Publications

Commission for Children and Young People. *Volatile Substance Misuse in Queensland*. September 2002, Brisbane, Queensland: Commission for Children and Young People.

Commission for Children and Young People. *Working with Children Kit June 2003*, Brisbane, Queensland: Commission for Children and Young People.

Presentations

In the 2002–03 Commission staff made over 75 public presentations to a large range of conferences and community groups, including:

Occasion	Speech Title	Location	Date	Presenter
Children's Expo 2002: Celebrating Childhood and Play	<i>Children are Important too!</i>	Townsville	21-22 Sept 2002	Robin Sullivan
AHISA Conference	<i>Family, Faculty, Fellowship and Fun: Gifting our Children and Young People for their Futures</i>	Church of England Grammar School Brisbane	9 July 2002	Barry Salmon
Issues Paper launch	<i>Opening address for launch of the Commission's Issues Paper Series</i>	Customs House, Brisbane	1 Aug 2002	Robin Sullivan
Creche and Kindergarten International Early Childhood Conference	<i>Early childhood communities: The making of children's culture and relationships and the construction of identities</i>	Broad-beach	25 June 2002	Robin Sullivan
Playgroup Association State Conference	<i>Learning from each other</i>	Brisbane	10 Aug 2002	Barry Salmon
Father and son breakfast	"My dad is so special to me"	Brisbane	9 Aug 2002	Barry Salmon
Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Qld	Annual General Meeting opening address	Brisbane	17 Sept 2002	Robin Sullivan
Anglicare National Conference	Valuing the Future	Brisbane	17 Sept 2002	Robin Sullivan
QCAN Annual Conference	<i>Times they are a changing</i>	Brisbane	31 Aug 2002	Barry Salmon
Family Day Care Conference	Quest for quality	Brisbane	22 Aug 2002	Robin Sullivan
Youth Challenge	Award presentation	Brisbane	23 Oct 2002	Barry Salmon
Launch of the Year of the Child 2003	Value of children	Brisbane	20 Oct 2002	Robin Sullivan
RENEW Conference – Keynote address	Getting in touch with children's worlds	Brisbane	7 Oct 2002	Robin Sullivan
Opening 2002 National Playgroup Celebrations	<i>Opening 2002 National Playgroup Celebrations</i>	Brisbane	20 Oct 2002	Barry Salmon
Good Beginnings Conference	<i>The Early Years – 'Setting the Stage'</i>	Brisbane	23 Oct 2002	Sue Howard
Caboolture Domestic Violence Service Inc. AGM, 10th birthday	<i>Launch of new resources</i>	Brisbane	22 Nov 2002	Barry Salmon
Launch of PeakCare Costings Report	<i>Launch of the report</i>	Brisbane	21 Nov 2002	Barry Salmon

Occasion	Speech Title	Location	Date	Presenter
Critical Early Years Conference	<i>Links between current knowledge about the status of children and the work of the Commission</i>	Melbourne	8 Nov 2002	Sue Howard
Family Planning Queensland – Launch of CD Rom Feel Safe	<i>Launch of CD Rom Feel Safe</i>	Brisbane	3 Dec 2002	Barry Salmon
Macgregor Primary School 2002 Awards Assembly	<i>2002 Awards Assembly</i>	Brisbane	4 Dec 2002	Barry Salmon
Australian Association for Research in Education Conference 2002 UQ	<i>Talking about youth participation – where, when and why?</i>	Brisbane	5 Dec 2002	Linda Newman & Sue Howard
National conference: ‘Challenges and Choices’	<i>Social Challenges – The Challenges for Today’s Youth</i>	Brisbane	8 Jan 2003	Barry Salmon
Opening address at Queensland Health Conference	<i>From School to Community – Promoting the Health of Adolescents 12-18 Years</i>	Brisbane	22 Jan 2003	Barry Salmon
Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) Conference – 4 Papers	Child protection is everybody’s business: contributions from the Queensland Commission for Children and Young People - Symposium	Melbourne	12 Feb 2003	Robin Sullivan Sue Howard
Keynote address at the forum for the Cairns Early Childhood Development Project	<i>Early Years Forum</i>	Cairns	19 Feb 2003	Robin Sullivan
3rd National Homelessness Conference	<i>“I just wanted a roof over my head” – Young people’s views of out-of-home care</i>	Brisbane	7 Apr 2003	Linda Newman
State Youth Affairs Conference	<i>Volatile substance misuse – a community engagement strategy</i>	Mackay	14 Apr 2003	Natalie Neithe
Family Support Visitors Training Program	<i>Volunteering for Children and their Families</i>	Lawnton	14 May 2003	Robin Sullivan
Children and the law Issues in the Asia Pacific Region	<i>Past, present and future directions: Reflections on the Commission for Children and Young People in Queensland</i>	Brisbane	20 June 2003	Jason Kidd
4th Qld Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network Conference	<i>Domestic and Family Violence, the Perspectives of Children and Young People</i>	Brisbane	19 June 2003	Robin Sullivan

Financial summary



Revenue

	2002-03	2001-02
ESS – Employed Screening Fees	\$699 580	\$616 290
ESS – Self Employed Screening Fees	\$166 760	\$263 280
ESS – Renewals Screening Fees	\$11 000	
ESS – Other Screening Fees	\$2 290	
Grants from Government	\$5 828 176	\$2 747 000
Bank Interest	\$88 003	\$75 944
Other Revenue	\$2 995 865	\$49 775
TOTAL	\$9 791 674	\$3 752 289

Expenses

	2002-03	2001-02
Employee Related Services	\$3 461 945	\$2 368 536
Supplies and Services	\$5 734 972	\$1 352 441
Depreciation and Amortisation	\$101 429	\$69 189
Other Operating Expenses	\$48 616	\$92 946
TOTAL	\$9 346 962	\$3 883 112

Net Worth

	2002-03	2001-02
Total Assets	\$1 452 000	\$1 182 000
Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles	\$459 000	\$363 000
Total Liabilities	(\$619 000)	(\$795 000)
NET ASSETS	\$833 000	\$387 000

Financial statements

Table of contents

Statement of Financial Performance	57
Statement of Financial Position	58
Statement of Cash Flows	59
Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements	60
Management Certificate	70
Independent Audit Report	71

AAS37(4.4)(b) This financial report covers the Commission for Children and Young People.

AAS37(5.1)(a),(c) The Commission for Children and Young People is an independent statutory body attached to the Premier's portfolio proclaimed under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000*.

AAS37(5.1)(b) A description of the nature of the Commission's operations and its principal activities is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Commission for Children and Young People

Statement of Financial Performance

For year ended 30 June 2003

		2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Revenues from ordinary activities			
User charges	3	887	885
Grants and other contributions	4	5,828	2,747
Assets assumed/liabilities relinquished	5	47	41
Other	6	3,031	79
Total revenues from ordinary activities		9,793	3,752
Expenses from ordinary activities			
Employee expenses	7	3,462	2,369
Supplies and services	8	5,735	1,352
Depreciation and amortisation	9	101	69
Liabilities assumed/assets relinquished	10	44	48
Other	11	5	45
Total expenses from ordinary activities		9,347	3,883
Net surplus/(deficit)		446	(131)
Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with owners as owners		446	(131)

The above Statement of Financial Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2003

		2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Current assets			
Cash assets	12	911	759
Receivables	13	53	60
Inventories	14	29	-
Total current assets		993	819
Non-current assets			
Plant and equipment	15	371	265
Intangibles	16	89	98
Total non-current assets		460	363
Total assets		1,453	1,182
Current liabilities			
Payables	17	225	222
Provisions	18	87	214
Other	19	119	359
Total current liabilities		431	795
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	18	188	-
Total non-current liabilities		188	-
Total liabilities		619	795
Net assets		834	387
Equity			
Contributed equity	20	376	376
Retained surplus	20	458	11
Total equity		834	387

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

Commission for Children and Young People

Statement of Cash Flows

For year ended 30 June 2003

	2003	2002
	\$'000	\$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
User charges	644	1,183
Grants and other contributions	5,828	2,709
Interest received	88	76
GST collected from ATO	217	151
GST input tax credits received	3	6
Other	8	1
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Employee costs	(3,363)	(2,322)
Supplies and services	(2,883)	(1,325)
Insurance premiums	-	(3)
GST paid on purchases	(217)	(150)
GST remitted to ATO	(3)	(6)
Other	-	(5)
Net cash provided by operating activities	21	315
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
<i>Inflows:</i>		
Sales of plant and equipment	14	1
<i>Outflows:</i>		
Payments for plant and equipment	(184)	(242)
Net cash used in investing activities	(170)	(241)
Net increase in cash held	152	74
Cash at beginning of financial year	759	685
Cash at end of financial year	12	759

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

1. Objectives of the Commission

The Commission for Children and Young People is an independent statutory body with a strategic commitment to promote and protect the rights, interests and well being of children and young people in Queensland. The Commission's key outcomes include:

- advocating for the rights, interests and well being of children and young people;
- safeguarding children and young people from harm;
- monitoring laws, policies and practices that impact on children and young people; and
- promoting evidence based practice in relation to children and young people's issues.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are a general purpose financial report and have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977*, *Financial Management Standard 1997*, Australian Accounting Standards and other prescribed requirements.

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

The accounting policies adopted are consistent with those for the previous year.

The accrual basis of accounting has been adopted.

(b) The Reporting Entity

The financial statements include all assets, liabilities, equities, revenues and expenses of the Commission.

(c) User Charges and Fees

User charges and fees controlled by the Commission are recognised as revenues when applications are received or when invoices for related services are issued. User charges and fees are controlled by the Commission where they can be deployed for the achievement of the Commission's objectives.

(d) Grants and Other Contributions

Grants, donations and gifts which are non-reciprocal in nature are recognised as revenue in the year in which the Commission obtains control over them.

Where grants are received that are reciprocal in nature, revenue is accrued over the term of the funding arrangements.

Contributions of assets are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are only recognised when a fair value can be determined reliably and the services would be purchased if not donated.

(e) Cash

For the purposes of the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes all cash and cheques received but not banked as well as deposits at call with financial institutions. It also includes highly liquid investments with short periods to maturity which are readily convertible to cash on hand at the Commission's option and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

(f) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at the amount due at the time of sale or service delivery. Settlement on trade debtors is generally required within fourteen days. The collectability of receivables is assessed periodically with provision being made for doubtful debts if required.

(g) Inventories

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Cost of inventories is assigned on a first-in-first-out basis.

(h) Acquisitions of Assets

Cost is used for the initial recording of all acquisitions of assets controlled by the Commission unless these have been received as a result of a machinery-of-Government restructure.

In the later case, the assets are recognised at their gross carrying amount in the books of the transferor immediately prior to the

transfer together with any accumulated depreciation offset.

Assets acquired at no cost or for nominal consideration are recognised at their 'fair value' at date of acquisition in accordance with AAS21 – *Acquisition of Assets*.

Cost is determined as the value given as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition, including all other costs incurred in getting the assets ready for use, including architects' fees and engineering design fees.

(i) Plant and Equipment

All items of plant and equipment with a cost or other value in excess of \$2,000 are capitalised in the year of acquisition, with the exception of personal computers which are capitalised regardless of value, and leasehold improvements with a cost or other value greater than \$5,000. Other items with a value less than these amounts are expensed. Plant and equipment and leasehold improvements are valued at cost in accordance with Queensland Treasury's *Non-current Asset Accounting Guidelines for the Queensland Public Sector*.

(j) Amortisation and Depreciation of Non-Current Assets

Depreciation on plant and equipment, is calculated on a straight-line basis so as to write off the net cost of each depreciable asset less its estimated residual value, progressively over its estimated useful life to the Commission.

Work-in-progress is not depreciated until it has reached service delivery capacity.

The depreciable amount of improvements to or on a leasehold property is progressively allocated over the estimated useful lives of the improvements to the Commission or the unexpired period of the lease, whichever is shorter.

For each class of depreciable asset the following depreciation rates are used:

Class	Depreciation Rate
Plant and equipment:	
Computers	33.3%
Office equipment	20%
Other equipment / furniture	10%
Leasehold improvements:	
Office fitout	10%

Class	Amortisation Rate
Intangibles:	
Internal use software	20%

(k) Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to ownership, and operating leases under which the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Operating lease payments are representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets and accordingly are expensed in the periods in which they are incurred.

(l) Intangibles

Intangible assets are costs incurred by the Commission in developing software and systems. The costs are amortised over the expected useful life to the Commission of the developed software.

All intangible assets with costs greater than \$5,000 are recognised as assets. Items with a lesser value are recognised as expenses.

Software as developed by the Commission is valued at cost. Cost is determined as the initial purchase of software (where relevant) and subsequent costs incurred in developing the software for use within the Commission.

(m) Payables

Creditors are recognised at the amount to be paid in the future for goods and services received, inclusive of GST.

(n) Employee Entitlements

Wages and Salaries, Annual Leave and Sick Leave

Liabilities for wages, salaries and annual leave at reporting date are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position at the remuneration rates expected to apply at the time of settlement and include related on-costs such as payroll tax, Workcover premiums and employee superannuation contributions. As the pattern of sick leave taken is expected to be stable in the future, and sick leave entitlements do not vest with employees, no provision has been made for sick leave entitlements.

Long Service Leave

Under the State Government's long service leave scheme a levy is made on the Commission to cover this expense. Amounts paid to employees for long service leave are claimed from the scheme as and when leave is taken.

No provision for long service leave is recognised in the financial statements, the liability being held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in the financial report prepared pursuant to AAS31 – *Financial Reporting by Governments*.

Superannuation

The State Actuary determines the rate of employer contributions for superannuation expense. These contributions are paid to QSuper. No liability is recognised for superannuation benefits in the Statement of Financial Position, as the liability is held on a whole-of-Government basis and reported in the whole-of-Government financial statements prepared in terms of AAS31 – *Financial Reporting by Governments*.

(o) Taxation

The Commission for Children and Young People is exempt from all forms of Commonwealth and State taxation except for Fringe Benefits Tax, Payroll Tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST). As such, GST input tax credits receivable and GST payable from/to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) are recognised and accrued. Further disclosure is provided in Note 13.

The amount of GST incurred on purchases that is not recoverable from the ATO is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of the expense item.

All fees relating to the Employment Screening service are GST-free in accordance with a Division 81 determination of the *New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*.

(p) Services Received Free of Charge or For Nominal Value

Services received free of charge or for nominal value which can be reliably measured and which would have been acquired in the normal course of operations are recognised as a revenue and an expense.

(q) Insurance

The Commission's non-current physical assets and other risks are insured through the Queensland Government Insurance Fund with premiums being paid on a risk basis. In addition, the Commission pays premiums to Workcover Queensland in respect of its obligations for employee compensation.

(r) Rounding and Comparatives

Amounts included in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or where the amount is \$500 or less, to zero.

Comparative information has been restated where necessary to be consistent with disclosures in the current reporting period.

Commission for Children and Young People
Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements 2003

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
3. User Charges		
Employment screening	880	880
Conference and course registration	7	5
Total	887	885
4. Grants and Other Contributions		
Grants from Queensland Government Departments	5,828	2,747
Total	5,828	2,747
5. Assets Assumed/Liabilities Relinquished		
Employee annual leave transferred	47	38
Assets and revenues assumed	-	3
Total	47	41
6. Other Revenue		
Police criminal history checks received below fair value	2,932	-
Interest earned	88	76
Gain on sale of plant and equipment	2	1
Other	9	2
Total	3,031	79
7. Employee Expenses		
Salaries, wages and allowances	2,904	2,007
Salary related taxes	175	107
Employer superannuation contributions	308	204
Long service leave levy	43	29
Other	32	22
Total	3,462	2,369

Annual and sick leave expenses have been included in salaries, wages and allowances.

Number of Employees: **64.6** **43.5**

The number of employees includes both full-time employees and part-time employees measured on a full-time equivalent basis.

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
8. Supplies and Services		
Motor vehicle running costs	29	34
Building services	237	267
Telecommunications	91	66
Administration costs	826	324
Advertising and promotions	80	278
Police criminal history checks	3,727	136
Professional services	545	138
Travel	80	53
Minor capital works	52	23
Minor plant and equipment	41	17
Other	27	16
Total	5,735	1,352

Contractors and consultants expenses are included in professional services.

9. Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation expenses for the financial year were charged in respect of:

Plant and equipment	77	51
Internal use software	24	18
Total	101	69

10. Liabilities Assumed/Assets Relinquished

Liabilities assumed – employee annual leave	44	48
Total	44	48

11. Other Expenses

Loss on disposal of non-current assets	-	37
Audit fees – QAO	5	5
Insurance	-	3
Total	5	45

During 2001-02, the Commission moved premises. Due to this move, the capitalised fit-out cost of the previous location (\$37,320) was written-off as a loss in that year.

12. Cash Assets

Cash at bank	512	435
Cash on hand	1	1
Deposits at call	398	323
Total	911	759

The above figures are reconciled to cash at the end of the year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows.

Commission for Children and Young People
Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements 2003

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
13. Receivables		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade debtors	20	24
Other debtors	3	1
GST input tax credits receivable	30	35
Total	53	60
14. Inventory		
<i>Current</i>		
Inventories held for resale	29	-
Total	29	-
15. Plant and Equipment		
Plant and equipment		
At cost	446	274
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(201)	(147)
Total	245	127
Leasehold improvements		
At cost	138	138
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(12)	-
Total	126	138
Total	371	265
16. Intangibles		
Internal use software:		
Work in progress	15	-
At cost	133	133
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(59)	(35)
Total	89	98

Reconciliation

Reconciliation of the carrying amount of each class of plant and equipment and intangibles at the beginning and end of the current financial year:

	Plant & Equipment \$'000	Leasehold Improvements \$'000	Intangibles \$'000	Total \$'000
Carrying amount at 1 July	127	138	98	363
Acquisitions	195	-	15	210
Disposals	12	-	-	12
Depreciation/ Amortisation	65	12	24	101
Carrying amount at 30 June	245	126	89	460

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
17. Payables		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade creditors	204	222
Employee entitlements payable	21	-
Total	225	222

18. Provisions		
<i>Current</i>		
Employee Entitlements		
- Annual leave	87	214
<i>Non-Current</i>		
Employee Entitlements		
- Annual leave	188	-
Total	275	214

19. Other Liabilities		
<i>Current</i>		
Unearned revenue	119	359
Total	119	359

	Retained Surpluses		Contributed Equity		Total	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Balance 1 July	11	142	376	376	387	518
Net surplus/(deficit)	447	(131)	-	-	447	(131)
Balance 30 June	458	11	376	376	834	387

Commission for Children and Young People
Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements 2003

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
21. Reconciliation of Net Surplus / (Deficit) to Net Cash provided by Operating Activities		
Net surplus / (deficit)	446	(131)
Non-cash items		
Depreciation/Amortisation expenses	101	69
Net assets and liabilities assumed / relinquished	(3)	7
Loss on sale of plant and equipment	-	37
Net assets write on / adjustments	(2)	-
Gain on sale of plant and equipment	(1)	(1)
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase)/decrease in GST input tax credits receivable	5	(2)
(Increase)/decrease in net receivables	-	(11)
(Increase)/decrease in LSL reimbursement receivables	4	(3)
Increase in inventory	(30)	-
Increase/(decrease) in unearned revenue	(240)	259
Increase in employee provisions	62	56
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(41)	35
Increase in salaries and wages payable	21	-
Net Cash provided by operating activities	322	315

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
22. Commitments for Expenditure		
(a) Non-cancellable operating lease commitments		
Commitments under operating leases at reporting date are inclusive of GST and are payable as follows:		
• Not later than one year	228	240
• Later than one year and not later than five years	641	1,000
Total non-cancellable operating lease commitments	869	1,240
(b) Capital Expenditure Commitments		
Material capital expenditure commitments inclusive of GST contracted for but not recognised are payable as follows:		
Plant and equipment	57	10
Total capital expenditure commitments	57	10
Payable:		
Not later than one year	57	10
	57	10
(c) Other Expenditure Commitments		
Material expenditure commitments inclusive of GST contracted for but not recognised are payable as follows:		
• Not later than one year	21	23
Total other expenditure commitments	21	23

23. Financial Instruments

(a) Interest Rate Risk Exposure

The Commission's exposure to interest rate risk and the effective interest rates of financial assets and financial liabilities are shown in following table:

	Floating Rate	Maturity Date:			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average Rate
		1 year or less	1 to 5 years	Greater than 5 years			
Financial Assets							
Cash	513	-	-	-	-	513	3.75%
Deposits at call	398	-	-	-	-	398	4.50%
Receivables	-	-	-	-	52	52	N.A.
Total	911	-	-	-	52	963	4.13%
Financial Liabilities							
Payables	-	-	-	-	225	225	N.A.
Total	-	-	-	-	225	225	N.A.

(b) Credit Risk Exposure

The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets net of any provisions for doubtful debts as indicated in the Statement of Financial Position.

No significant credit risks have been identified.

(c) Net Fair Value

The net fair value of cash and cash equivalents and non-interest bearing monetary financial assets and financial liabilities approximate their carrying amounts.

Certificate of the Commission for Children and Young People

This general purpose financial report has been prepared pursuant to section 46F(1) of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977* (the Act), the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with Section 46F(3) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

- a) The prescribed requirements of establishment and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- b) The statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of the Commission for Children and Young People for the financial year ended 30 June 2003 and of the financial position as at the end of that year.

23rd September 2003

Robin Sullivan
Commissioner for Children and Young People

Peta Shipley
A/Manager, Corporate Services

Independent Audit Report

To the Commission for Children and Young People

Matters relating to the electronic presentation of the audited financial statements

The audit report relates to the financial statements of the Commission for Children and Young People for the financial year ended 30 June 2003 included on Commission for Children and Young People's web site. The Commission is responsible for the integrity of the Commission for Children and Young People's web site. The audit report refers only to the financial statements identified below and does not include a review of the integrity of this web site or provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements. If users of the financial statements are concerned with the inherent risks arising from electronic data communications they are advised to refer to the hard copy of the audited financial statements, available from Commission for Children and Young People, to confirm the information included in the audited financial statements presented on this web site.

These matters also relate to the presentation of the audited financial statements in other electronic media including CD Rom.

Scope

The financial statements of the Commission for Children and Young People consist of the Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to and forming part of the financial statements and certificates given by the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the officer responsible for the financial administration of the Commission for Children and Young People, for the year ended 30 June 2003.

The Commission is responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the financial statements, the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial statements.

As required by law, an independent audit was conducted in accordance with QAO Auditing Standards to enable me to provide an independent opinion whether in all material respects the financial statements are presented fairly, in accordance with the prescribed requirements, including any mandatory financial reporting requirements as approved by the Treasurer for application in Queensland.

Audit procedures included -

- examining information on a test/sample basis to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements,
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Commission,
- obtaining written confirmation regarding the material representations made in conjunction with the audit, and
- reviewing the overall presentation of information in the financial statements.

Independent Audit Report continued

Independence

The *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977* promotes the independence of the Auditor-General and QAO authorised auditors.

The Auditor-General is the auditor of all public sector entities and can only be removed by Parliament.

The Auditor-General may conduct an audit in any way considered appropriate and is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which powers are to be exercised.

The Auditor-General has for the purposes of conducting an audit, access to all documents and property and can report to Parliament matters which in the Auditor-General's opinion are significant.

Audit Opinion

In accordance with section 46G of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977* -

- (a) I have received all the information and explanations which I have required; and
- (b) in my opinion -
 - (i) the prescribed requirements in respect of the establishment and keeping of accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
 - (ii) the statements have been drawn up so as to present a true and fair view, in accordance with the prescribed accounting standards of the transactions of the Commission of Children and Young People for the financial year 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 and of the financial position as at the end of that year.

J P Beh, FCPA
Director of Audit
(as Delegate of the Auditor-General of Queensland)

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane



02-03



Commission for
Children & Young People
Queensland Government

Address: Commission for Children and Young People

Level 14 T&G Building
141 Queen Street
Brisbane Qld Australia 4000

Postal

PO Box 12671
Brisbane George Street
Qld Australia 4003