

**IN THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
AT DARWIN**

SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT

Name	Simone Jackson
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Occupation	Executive Director, Out of Home Care Division, Department of Children and Families
Date	14 October 2014

1. During my appearance before the Commission on 29 September 2014, I undertook to provide a response on behalf of the Department of Children and Families to a number of questions. I do so below.

Incidence of sexual abuse of children in care

2. At paragraph 72 of my original statement dated 15 September 2014, I stated that in the last financial year there were three cases of substantiated sexual abuse in care. In my evidence (Transcript, line 18, C5417), I undertook to provide the historical rates of sexual abuse relating to children in care. I attach at Annexure A a table showing the extracted data by year for all allegations and for allegations of sexual exploitation.

Monitoring training programs and professional development of staff employed by externally funded NGO care providers

3. In my evidence (Transcript, line 25, C5410), I responded to questions concerning the Department's role in monitoring the training and professional development of staff employed by externally funded non-government care providers.
4. Non-government organisations providing out of home care services are required to produce performance reports to DCF in relation to their service delivery.
5. In 2013-2014, DCF conducted a public tender process for general residential care. Prospective providers were required to demonstrate that staff were subject to and satisfied educational requirements, including a requirement that the provider ensure all staff (and volunteers) have appropriate qualifications, skills and attributes to support clients who have experienced trauma from abuse or neglect. In particular, workers are required to be trained in therapeutic care approaches (e.g. how trauma affects children and young

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people, and how and why children and young people's ways of coping with this trauma might be maladaptive).

6. The service specifications require providers and staff to submit a monthly roster and a report that identifies the number of staff who are involved in the provision of care within each residential place of care, the qualifications of those staff, any training undertaken by staff, and the number of direct care staff within the direct care staff team who are trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI).
7. DCF is progressively extending these service specifications to all contracted residential care providers, and in May 2014 all contracted providers delivering residential care were asked to produce details of all staff, including details of their qualifications and current training. This process is repeated every six months, and also occurs on an ad hoc basis when DCF considers that it is necessary (i.e. when there are questions or concerns about the quality of service being provided by an individual provider). DCF also provides the Department's training calendar to non-government organisations and invites their staff to attend.


Cross-agency work on protective behaviours

8. In my evidence (Transcript, line 23, C5422), I answered questions in relation to the protective behaviour campaigns and services that were provided in the Northern Territory. I was asked for more information in relation to those campaigns and services.
9. In April 2014, a project was initiated to review the protective behaviours programs and approaches used across DCF.
10. Within DCF, both the Child Abuse Taskforce and the Mobile Outreach Service Plus teams deliver protective behaviour services to children. The Mobile Outreach Service Plus service has had a specialised Sexual Assault and Problem Sexual Behaviour team in place since January 2012. Senior Aboriginal Community Workers within the Child Abuse Taskforce were trained in Protective Behaviours in 2013. DCF also funds the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) to deliver a range of advocacy programs. This includes the "All Children Being Safe" and "Our Kids, Safe and Strong" programs that include protective behaviours.

How carers are advised of their obligations to report suspected abuse

11. In my evidence (Transcript, line 12, C5413), I was asked how carers are advised of their obligations to report suspected abuse and how they are informed of the process. The Placement Agreement requires the carer to notify an authorised person immediately if a child: (a) is missing, has a major accident, or suffers serious illness or death; (b) any proposal for the child to travel outside the Northern Territory; and (c) any proposed change of address by the carer. Foster carer induction training includes information on mandatory reporting, and the Foster Care Handbook contains details of the Child Abuse/Child Protection Hotline.

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12. The Foster Care Handbook informs carers that should they be the subject of an allegation of inappropriate conduct, DCF will take steps to investigate and resolve the allegation as quickly and transparently as possible, to ensure the safety of child. For obvious reasons, carers are not provided with copies of the internal investigation policy.
13. Standards 2.9 to 2.11 of the DCF Standards of Professional Practice provide that DCF staff must ensure clients understand their rights, raise concerns and respond professionally to adverse events and complaints. Standard 6.10 requires that children and carers are aware of their responsibility to report critical incidents and standard of care concerns, and Standard 6.11 requires DCF to take immediate action to resolve all issues, concerns and allegations.

BOI recommendations

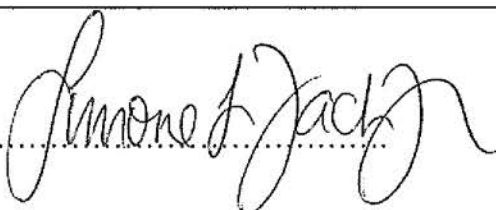
14. While giving my evidence, I was asked how many of the BOI recommendations had been implemented (Transcript, line 40, C5423), and which recommendations were not being implemented (Transcript, line 5, C5424).
15. On 28 November 2012, the then Minister for Children and Families made a statement in the Northern Territory Parliament addressing the future of child protection and the response to the Board of Inquiry. In her statement, the then Minister stated:

Fifty-six recommendations have been completed. A further 91 recommendations have commenced, with 69 to be progressed as intended by the inquiry; 14 of these will be completed late in 2012 or early 2013. Eleven recommendations have been superseded. The intent of the recommendations will still be implemented; however, the method of implementation has been modified. Two recommendations are at the discretion of the court. Nine are identified as not possible to complete within current budget constraints.

16. The nine recommendations that were identified as not possible to complete were recommendations 9, 10, 11, 109, 111, 117, 141, 144 and 146.

Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Program and Mobile Child Protection team

17. Before the Commission (Transcript, line 47, C5534), the Children's Commissioner was asked about the Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Program (RAFCP). He advised that DCF could provide further details. The Commissioner was also asked (Transcript, line 11, C5534) about the Mobile Child Protection team. He again advised that DCF could provide further details.
18. RAFCP staff work alongside other teams in DCF to provide culturally appropriate support to vulnerable Aboriginal children and families in designated remote Northern Territory communities. It also offers outreach support to nearby communities that share language and family connections. The program employs 28 local Aboriginal people to support vulnerable families who are either on the verge of entering the statutory child protection system, are in the system, or who need support to exit it. The target for the

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program was to provide services to 13 communities. That target has been surpassed and the program currently services 22 communities.

19. The Mobile Child Protection Teams employ 20 child protection workers who are able to travel to remote locations to respond to concerns about children in the Northern Territory. Between July and August 2014, the Mobile Child Protection team completed 167 investigations.

Signed:

Simon J. Jack
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J. Lyre
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Date: 14 October 2014

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Simon J. Jack

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J. Lyre

Attachment

Notifications, Investigations and Substantiations of all Abuse in Care 2009-10 to 2013-14 showing those recorded as sexual exploitation matters

Financial Year	Notifications Received		Proceed to Investigation		Substantiated	
	Total	Sexual Exploitation	Total	Sexual Exploitation	Total	Sexual Exploitation
2009-10	74	20	46	10	7	1
2010-11	54	4	22	1	5	0
2011-12	74	17	42	6	7	2
2012-13	14	2	12	2	10	0
2013-14	54	6	46	5	12	3

Note: This table shows all notifications that were classified as 'abuse in care' at the point of notification. Source: CCIS/Business Objects, CP Notifications Abuse in Care, extracted 01 August 2014.

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