

Highlights

Indigenous Child Placement Principle

Audit Report 2010/11

The audit scope and evidence base

The Commission has a legislative responsibility to monitor the Department of Communities' compliance with section 83 of the *Child Protection Act 1999*. This prescribes a process that must be followed when making out-of-home care placement decisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to help maintain their connection to family, community and culture.

The *Indigenous Child Placement Principle Audit Report 2010/11* is comprised of **three components** which together provide a comprehensive view of the administration of section 83 and what it can achieve for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care. This has involved auditing:

- **the Department of Communities' mechanisms supporting compliance with section 83** (the policies, procedures and record keeping infrastructure in place), based on a targeted evaluation of implementation of the 28 recommendations made in the inaugural (2008) audit to improve these areas
- **the Department of Communities' practice compliance with section 83**, based on an assessment of its electronic records and surveys of the Child Safety Officers and Recognised Entities involved in the 388 placement decisions that comprise the audit sample, and
- **the outcomes achieved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care**, based on their reported connection to family, community and culture as identified by the Commission's Community Visitors in their visits during July 2010.

To ensure transparency and provide advice on specific issues during this audit, the Commission established an Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak, the Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care, Foster Care Queensland, the Indigenous Studies Unit at the University of Queensland and the Department of Communities.

Key findings

This audit has identified the following key findings relevant to the three components of the audit:

- The Department of Communities has implemented 19 of the 28 recommendations made in the inaugural audit which were aimed at enhancing policies, practice and record keeping relevant to the application of section 83. The remaining nine recommendations are scheduled for completion in March/April 2012.
- Compliance with each step required by section 83 is quite good. However, when viewed together, complete compliance with all required steps was only achieved in 15% of the sample.
- Overall, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care were found to be experiencing positive outcomes relevant to their contact with family and community and their opportunity to participate in cultural activities and events.
- Those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people placed with Indigenous carers tended to experience the same, or better, outcomes across every measure of family and community contact and experience greater opportunities to participate in cultural activities and events.



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A better life for Queensland children

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