



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Michael Pettersson MLA

Reference: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs - Our Booris
Implementation/Community Services Directorate

Hearing: 18 February 2025

In relation to: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs - Our Booris Implementation

Question received: 24 February 2025

Answer Due: 3 March 2025

1. How many of the 2019 Our Booris: Our Way report recommendations have been implemented? When will *all* of the recommendations be implemented, allowing the Oversight Committee to be stood down? What is delaying their implementation?
2. What commitment is being made to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are placed with kin carers, rather than non-Indigenous carers?
3. One of the key Our Booris, Our Way recommendations was to make it so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children cannot be adopted by non-Indigenous families; only by kin. When will this recommendation be implemented?

Michael Pettersson MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Community Services Directorate (CSD) continues to work in partnership with the Our Booris Our Way Implementation Oversight Committee (OBOWIOC) to progress the implementation of the recommendations from the review. Rather than recording recommendations as complete/incomplete, the Committee has determined progress will be measured as high focus, medium focus or monitoring. As of June 2024, 12 recommendations have been identified as high focus and 12 recommendations have been identified as medium focus, with the remaining 12 recommendations in the monitoring phase.

The implementation of the recommendations is complex and requires comprehensive reform and CSD is working with the OBOWIOC together to provide stronger clarity on timeframe for completion which is not a set date at this time. CSD continues to work with the OBOWIOC to implement the recommendations through broad ranging changes to the child and youth protection system including changes to policy, practice, training and

staffing. This work continues to strengthen the responses available to children, young people and their families.

2. From 1 July 2024, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) was legislated in the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, further embedding culturally appropriate placements. An element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle is the placement hierarchy which is designed to ensure the highest possible level of connection to family, community, culture and country is maintained for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in out-of-home care. Children Youth and Families (CYF) practitioners are legislatively obligated to prioritise kin and apply hierarchy principles when there is a need to identify an alternative placement for a child outside the family home.

Practitioners are required to undertake the Foundational Learning Program and Cultural Development Program to support effective delivery of the ATSICPP process. A range of tools and mechanisms are available to find kin including Family Group Conferencing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Finding Practitioner. This is in addition to practitioners consulting directly with parents, kin and community, and utilising all records available to explore all available options.

CYF have also implemented a new process known as a Preliminary Kinship Decision (PKD). PKD enables Aboriginal children and young people to be placed with kin immediately upon entry into care. The PKD enables a real time initial check of criminal history and child protection information so there are no delays or gaps in placing children with kin when it is safe to do so, and while further assessment takes place.

3. CSD has a clear policy position on the non-adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for whom the Director-General has parental responsibility on long-term care and protection orders.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Michael Pettersson MLA

Date:

3/3/25