



SUBMISSION54.....

ANNUAL REPORT REVIEW (EXTERNAL TERRITORIES)

INFORMATION ON THE SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMONWEALTH IN RELATION TO FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW TEAM REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS**

MAY 2003

**SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENT (SDA):
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DCD)**

The Committee seeks information in relation to the following:

- (1) The service delivery agreement between the Western Australian Government and the Commonwealth in relation to family and community services* for the IOTs; and
- (2) The recommendations of the review team regarding the development of youth services for the IOTs

* The original SDA was between the Commonwealth and the State for services provided by the Department for Family and Children's Services. The name of the Department was changed to Department for Community Development in 2001.

**1. THE SDA BETWEEN THE WA GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMONWEALTH IN
RELATION TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE IOTS.**

1.1 Background to the SDA

Negotiations for DCD services in the IOTs commenced in the early 1990's. Due to differences between the State and the Commonwealth in respect of the industrial relations regime in the Territories, it was finally settled that the Commonwealth would employ the services of a Social Worker in the IOTs and that DCD would provide support and supervision for the Social Worker under a SDA which did not involve State employees living and working in the Territories.

The original SDA between the State and the Commonwealth was signed on 3 January 1999, and extended by agreement of the Parties to the Arrangement, until 30 September 2001. The renewed SDA commenced on 1 October 2001, and is due to expire on 30 June 2004.

In accordance with the terms of the arrangement between the Commonwealth and the State of Western Australia, the State provides services on behalf of the Commonwealth, subject to the relevant State persons and authorities receiving all appropriate delegations, appointments and vestings. In the case of DCD, the powers of the Commonwealth Minister for the Territories have been delegated to the Administrator of the Territories in respect of the following applied legislation:

- *Adoption Act 1994 (WA) (CI) (CKI)*
- *Welfare and Assistance Act 1961 (WA) (CI) (CKI)*
- *Child Welfare Act 1947 (WA) (CI) (CKI)*

It is important to note that the DCD Supervisor is not the line manager for the Social Worker. Since the SDA was first negotiated operational supervision of the Social Worker has been transferred from the Administrator to the Indian Ocean Health Services (IOTHS) Manager.

1.2 Provision of Services by DCD

Under the current SDA, DCD's role is to provide professional supervision and support services for the Indian Ocean Social Worker service; to provide advice and assistance to the IOTHS Health Manager in respect of the Social Worker's performance management and professional development; and to provide advice and assistance to the Administration in respect of the legislation administered under delegation to the Administrator.

These services are effected through:

- Accountability, workload management and priority setting;
- Professional development to enhance or expand the Social Worker's skills or knowledge;
- Psychological and interpersonal support;
- Mediation to bring to the attention of management of appropriate agencies, issues arising from the field that have an impact on service delivery and policy development; and
- Advice and assistance to the Administration in respect of the legislation administered under delegation to the Administrator, in particular:
 - Advice in respect to any situation requiring exercising of powers held by the Administration;
 - Clinical intervention services which are in the best interests of children and in accordance with DCD's current policies and practices;
 - Family dissolution - Family Court Counselling Services as directed by the Family Court of Western Australia; and
 - Provision of community education resource material, translated, where appropriate.

1.3 Method of Delivery

Services are delivered through both on-island and mainland based sources, including supervision via electronic and phone hookup on an "as needs" basis, and "in-person" supervision. Access to DCD consultancy services (or other agencies' consultancy services) and to unscheduled emergency supervision, on a 24-hour basis, is also provided.

1.4 Status of Services

Professional services have continued to be actively delivered by the DCD Supervisor on a regular, ongoing basis to the IOTHS Social Worker. In addition, other DCD professional officers are identified, briefed and available as a backup resource to the IOTHS Social Worker, as is the Department's Crisis Care Unit (24-hour service).

The DCD Supervisor made one visit to Christmas Island in November 2001. The visit allowed for direct face-to-face supervision, to review casework and community

activities carried out by the IOTHS Social Worker and to seek feedback from the key island service providers on the Social Work Service.

Other services provided in 2001/2 included:

- Professional development for the IOTHS Social Worker through attendance at the Joint Approach to Child Abuse (JACA) training in Perth in the company of a Senior Constable from the Federal Police Service on-island. This training was well received and further enhanced the close professional working relationship between social work and the police services.
- Sponsorship of a series of Triple P workshops for parents. The evaluation and feedback from course participants was very positive.
- A locum social worker was seconded to cover Social Worker leave. This arrangement worked well and ensured continuity in this essential service.
- Purchase and supply of reading and resource material both for the professional development and support of the IOT Social Worker and a community lending library.

In November 2002, the Community Services Officer from the Cocos (Keeling) Islands undertook a three-week placement at the DCD Midland office in Perth. The placement was for professional development and will enable establishment of networks to assist in service delivery on the islands.

The Social Work Service has gained a reputation as a professional and valuable service that makes a significant contribution to the health of IOT communities. This is evidenced through its high level of usage and in particular the number of self-referrals. The success of the service has been its ability to engage in the community and work in collaborative ways, and this service delivery model needs to be maintained.

2. THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE REVIEW TEAM REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES FOR THE IOTS

2.1 Recommendations arising from the 2000 Review of DCD Services

Following a review undertaken by the State and the Commonwealth in 2000, at the expiry of the original SDA, the Review Team recommended:

1. That the SDA between the Commonwealth and the State for the provision of FCS (DCD) services in the Indian Ocean Territories be renewed for a further three years.
2. That SDA services be expanded to include development of guidelines and procedures in any instance where the Administrator is required to consider exercising delegated powers under the applied acts.
3. That the renewed SDA takes into account any adjustments in FCS (DCD) services required in respect of the following issues:

- i Adoption Services for the IOTs.
- ii The provision of emergency foster care for both island communities.
- iii Self-care and worker safety issues for the social worker re clients involved in Family Court disputes or Domestic Violence.
- iv Possibility of a student social worker doing a placement under Commonwealth funding.
- v Youth services being further developed on both island communities.
- vi Accessing training and resources re parenting programs.
- vii Contribute to strategies for supporting expectant mothers travelling to the mainland to deliver their child.
- viii Contribute to strategies for supporting Year 11 and 12 students travelling to the mainland for further education.
- ix Determining with the IOTHS the viability of employing and supervising trainee community workers on both islands.
- x Determining how to deliver a more effective direct social work service to Cocos (Keeling) Island given the findings and recommendations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

4. That the SDA be amended to reflect changes in services required as a result of IOT Social Worker reporting through the IOTHS Health Manager.

2.2 Status of recommended services

DCD advises that all of the recommendations arising from the Review have either been addressed or are in the process of being addressed.

From a community capacity building perspective the Social Work Service has appropriately run early intervention and prevention programs within the islands' communities. The programs included Triple P Program; Conflict Resolution; and parent support groups.

With respect to specific Youth Services, it is understood that the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (FCS) is involved in projects such as Green Corp and the Family and Community Network Initiative, which incorporates youth-related components. These are funded by the Commonwealth FCS.

In addition to the recommendations stemming from the 2000 Review of services, DCD also proposes ongoing consideration of the following initiatives, which may include youth related activities:

- DCD to provide assistance in considering proposal for the new child care service on Christmas Island including long term support and monitoring functions to be included within an expanded SDA.
- Planning for services for individuals with disabilities.
- Need for increased Mental Health Services
- Need for increased Social work services on Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- Strategies for supporting students travelling to Perth.