

APPENDIX 4

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR *BRINGING THEM HOME*

On 11 May 1995, the then Attorney-General, Michael Lavarch MP, referred the issue of past and present practices of separation of Indigenous children from their families to the Commission. The Inquiry looked at four main issues or "terms of reference":

- The first was to examine the past and continuing effects of separation of individuals, families and communities. The Inquiry relied upon Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, government and non-government organisations to participate by making submissions or giving evidence to the Inquiry.
- The second was to identify what should be done in response, which could entail recommendations to change laws, policies and practices, to re-unite families and otherwise deal with losses caused by separation.
- The third was to find justification for, and nature of, any compensation for those affected by separation.
- The last looked at current laws, policies and practices affecting the placement and care of Indigenous children. This included looking into the welfare and juvenile justice systems, and advising on any changes in the light of the principles of self-determination.

The Inquiry undertook an extensive program of hearings in every capital city and in many regional and smaller centres. The first hearings took place on 4 December 1995 on Flinders Island with the last round of hearings ending on 3 October 1996 in Sydney.

