

First Progress Report

November 2018

One year on from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory's final report and six months into the reform journey, the Northern Territory Government is making substantial progress to improve support and services to families experiencing vulnerability and overhaul the child protection and youth justice systems.

Royal Commission timeline

2016	August	The Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments initiate the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT.
2017	November	The final report of the Royal Commission is delivered. It included 142 findings and 227 recommendations.
2018	March	The Northern Territory Government releases its response accepting the intent and direction of all 227 recommendations.
	April	The Northern Territory Government releases Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families to implement reforms to better support children, young people and families.
	November	The Northern Territory Government releases its first progress report, one year on from the Royal Commission and six months into the reform.

Current status of recommendations

Of the 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission, the Northern Territory is on-track to deliver the 218 recommendations that are our responsibility.

Complete	33
Well progressed	47
Work underway	122
Not yet started	16

Key achievements

Key achievements so far include:

- Legislative reform to amend the Youth Justice Act to give Territory Families legal responsibility for youth justice and improve the experience of young people by prohibiting the use of restraints and limiting the use of force, isolation and strip searches for young people in detention.
- Completion of significant 'fix and make safe' works at Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres, including new and separate education and female accommodation facilities at the Alice Springs Centre.
- Design tender released for the development of new, purpose-built youth detention centres in Darwin and Alice Springs.
- Improved partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and families to increase local decision-making and Aboriginal involvement in the child protection and youth justice systems.
- Introduction of new approaches to child protection to streamline processes, improve information-sharing, prioritise notifications, increase responsiveness and enhance support and services to children, young people and families. This has included One Child, One Case, Central Intake Service, and the release of a design tender for a new case management system.
- Construction of the Tennant Creek Child and Family Centre is underway – the first of 11 new centres to be built across the Northern Territory over the next five years.
- Development of a Multi-agency Crossover Family Working Group to increase information-sharing and co-ordination of service response to young people and their families in the child protection and youth justice services.
- Additional funding of \$2.5 million to increase the Office of the Children's Commissioner's capacity to monitor and audit the youth justice and child protection systems.

The next major milestones:

>>>Phase 1 – Delivery within 1 year (by 30 June 2019)

Open the Tennant Creek Child and Family Centre

Launch and implement the Signs of Safety practice framework in the Northern Territory

Renovate the Alice Springs Local Court to include a multi-purpose court room for matters relating to children and young people

Finalise the design tender for development of the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre

Commence the supported accommodation service for care leavers in Darwin

Establish two more Child and Family Centres (9 total)

Release and begin implementation of the Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care strategy

Commence Aboriginal foster and kinship carer programs

Draft and introduce the next round of priority legislative amendments

Commence the Community Youth Support Grants program and expand access to youth diversion

Finalise three more Local Decision Making agreements

Continue improvements in youth detention operations, practice and staff training

>>>Phase 2 – Delivery within 3 years (by 30 June 2021)

Commence implementation of the integrated client management system

Commence operation of the replacement youth justice centre in Darwin

Establish four more Child and Family Centres (13 total)

Commence Family Group Conferencing led by Aboriginal community organisations

Release of the Productivity Commission study into Northern Territory and Commonwealth funding

Establish Northern Territory and Australian Government joint planning mechanisms

Establish the Commission for Children and Young People

Establish the Police Youth and Families Division

Develop a Single Act for children in consultation with stakeholders and the community

>>>Phase 3 – Delivery within 5 years (by 30 June 2023)

Commence operation of the replacement youth justice centre in Alice Springs

Establish four more Child and Family Centres (17 total)

Establish a Youth and Children's Court facility in Alice Springs

Full implementation of the integrated client information system for child protection and youth justice