

COMMUNIQUÉ

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum (the Forum) held its first meeting of 2019 on 31 January in Alice Springs. This meeting was chaired by (acting chair) Ms Priscilla Atkins.

Territory Families provided the Forum with updates on the youth detention reforms that have been implemented since the Youth Detention Special Meeting held in November 2018 and forum members noted the ongoing improvements in youth detention.

Northern Territory Police presented to the Forum on the reforms being implemented in NT Police including the recent establishment of the Police Youth Engagement Division, and deployment of expanded youth development focused training. The Forum noted the significant progress made by NT Police.

Territory Families presented the law reform agenda to the forum including the development of a Single Act for Children. The Forum noted the legislative changes implemented to date, the future schedule for law reform and commitment of the Northern Territory Government to introduce the Single Act. The Forum also discussed the potential risks to the law reform and noted that further effort was required by the Forum to communicate the intent and benefits of the reforms to the public of the NT.

The Hon Michelle Landry MP, Commonwealth Assistant Minister for Children and Families addressed the Forum, discussing the Commonwealth government's place based initiatives and their reforms to family support services funding. The Assistant Minister also joined the Forum participants for an informal lunch.

The Forum agreed to a thematic approach to managing its future work program and where necessary, to progress key reforms out of session. The Forum agreed to the following 2019 themes:

- April 2019 Early Intervention and Prevention, including:
 - Measuring Outcomes
 - Child and Family Centres
 - NT and Commonwealth Government family support reforms
 - NT / Commonwealth Coordinated Funding Framework
- July 2019 Family and Community Engagement, including:
 - Family Group Conferencing
 - Local Decision Making
 - Place based approaches, - Stronger Communities, Stronger People
- October 2019 Transition and Restoration, including:
 - Housing for Young People
 - Training Pathways
 - Leaving Care

The Forum agreed to an out of session workshop to explore the use of comprehensive health assessments for young people entering detention and provision of specialist treatment. The Forum also agreed to continue to work between meetings on key aspects of the reform program.

