

CHILD PROTECTION — FORCED ADOPTIONS

456. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee: Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices from February 2012 and I ask for an update on what the McGowan Government is doing with regards to the following:

- (a) Recommendation 8 which recommends that the Commonwealth, States and Territories urgently determine a process to establish affordable and regionally available specialised professional support and counselling services to address the specific needs of those affected by former forced adoption policies and practices;
- (b) Recommendation 10 which recommends that financial contributions be sought from State and Territory Governments, institutions, and organisations that were involved in the practice of placing children of single mothers for adoption to support the funding of services described in the previous two recommendations;
- (c) Recommendation 13 which recommends all jurisdictions adopt integrated birth certificates, that these be issued to eligible people upon request, and that they be legal proof of identity of equal status to other birth certificates, and jurisdictions investigate harmonisation of births, deaths and marriages register access and the facilitation of a single national access point to those registers; and
- (d) Recommendation 17 which recommends that the States and Territories extend their Find and Connect information service to include adoption service providers?

**Hon Sue Ellery replied:**

- (a)–(d) The Department of Communities regularly attends Adoption Sector Meetings with other agencies such as Relationships Australia and Adoption Jigsaw and members from support groups are also invited to attend.

Communities continues to consider recommendations from the Senate Community Affairs References Committee: Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices.

The State Government provides funding to Adoption Jigsaw WA and the Adoption Research and Counselling Services to provide state-wide free support services to those affected by adoption. Relationships Australia provides a Find and Connect information service and the Adoption and Research Counselling Services and Adoption Jigsaw WA provide search, contact and mediation services.

The Commonwealth Government funds the Forced Adoption Support Service, provided by Relationships Australia. This is a free service accessible in Western Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania that can be accessed over the phone or online by those not in a position to visit face to face or that live in rural or regional areas.

Communities' Adoption Services currently provides adoptees with a letter which can be provided to Births, Deaths and Marriages to obtain an original birth certificate.

Communities is working to consider integrated birth certificates including identifying the extent of legislative changes required.