

child protection a fresh start.



Government of South Australia's
response to the Child Protection
Systems Royal Commission report:
The life they deserve.



Government
of South Australia

Attorney-General's
Department



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Foreword

The health, happiness and safety of our children and young people is one of our greatest responsibilities. Our children deserve the best possible system to protect their safety and wellbeing, but our present system is failing too many children.

We made an initial funding commitment of \$200 million to fundamentally change the way we manage child protection in South Australia. It's time for a fresh start.

The recently released Child Protection Systems Royal Commission report, *The life they deserve*, described shortcomings in our child protection system and beyond, and made extensive recommendations for improvement.

The government is committed to reorienting and building better systems that protect our children, improving parenting practices and supporting our carer community. We have already accepted and begun implementing 42 recommendations, including launching the new Department for Child Protection on 1 November 2016. The system shortcomings revealed in the Royal Commission report and the remaining recommendations have been comprehensively reviewed by the government over the past few months to help inform our way forward.

It is absolutely essential that all child protection reform work is rigorous and undertaken within the context of our child-friendly state. As such, we have analysed each recommendation from multiple angles, drawing on the expertise of the child protection sector to predict what resources will be required, what benefits will be achieved and the potential challenges and impacts associated with the proposed changes.

We would like to thank our key partners and our staff for their input and invaluable insights throughout

this process. Our consultation with these groups has guided our analysis of Commissioner Nyland's recommendations.

A fresh start responds to each of Commissioner Nyland's recommendations, but also looks beyond the statutory child protection system to develop a broader child development system. This system begins before birth and seeks to avoid children ever entering the statutory child protection system.

To achieve this we must heighten our focus on the earliest of interventions to assist vulnerable families and children before they enter the system. Prevention will always be the best solution, and families must be supported as soon as possible with evidence-based services and programs that are targeted to their needs. These services and programs extend beyond the statutory child protection system into our mainstream health, education and other wellbeing services.

However, an unfortunate reality of any child protection system is that tragedies will occur.

The Department for Child Protection responds to protect children when they have already experienced abuse and neglect. The work of the department is supported by a dedicated collective of community groups, non-government agencies and individuals. This collective must be supported, allowing them to respond swiftly and effectively to prevent further abuse and neglect. This includes increasing the capacity, safety and stability of out-of-home care when a child needs to be removed from their biological parents, improving organisational culture and transforming the way we work.

It means a greater recognition of the child's voice, giving young people the power to influence the decisions that affect them, and putting the child at the centre of everything we do.



The government is committed to reorienting and building better systems that protect our children, improving parenting practices and supporting our carer community.

The new system design also needs to respond to the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the child protection system.

Aboriginal people have cared for country and raised children in culturally rich environments for thousands of generations. We acknowledge that policies and actions of the past have caused irreversible damage to Aboriginal families and that the effects of the forced removal of the Stolen Generations continue to this day. We recognise that we have a special responsibility to assist and strengthen Aboriginal families, to address the unique challenges they face, and to ensure Aboriginal children have the strongest possible connection to their people and their Culture.

Our sincere thanks go to the government staff, non-government service providers and community groups who continue to deliver services to the best of their ability during this time of significant change. Your job is incredibly difficult, requiring a level of commitment and strength that is unique to your sector. Child protection is everybody's business, and your work makes a real difference in children's lives every day.

A fresh start provides a framework for reform, leading us towards a strong, resilient and effective child protection system. As a united community dedicated to all children, and especially the most vulnerable, we can give our young people *The life they deserve*.

Jay Weatherill MP
Premier of South Australia

John Rau MP
Deputy Premier
Attorney-General
Minister For Child Protection Reform

Susan Close MP
Minister For Education
And Child Development

Government leadership

Child protection is a whole-of-government priority. By working together, our leaders will deliver a strong, united vision for child protection in South Australia.



Hon Jay Weatherill
Premier of South Australia



Hon John Rau
*Deputy Premier
Minister for Child
Protection Reform
Attorney-General*



Hon Susan Close
*Minister for Education and
Child Development*



Hon Jack Snelling
Minister for Health



Hon Zoe Bettison
*Minister for Communities and
Social Inclusion
Minister for Youth*



Hon Leesa Vlahos
*Minister for Disabilities
Minister for Mental Health and
Substance Abuse*



Hon Kyam Maher
*Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
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Hon Peter Malinauskas
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*Chief Executive,
Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion*



Nerida Saunders
*Executive Director, Aboriginal
Affairs and Reconciliation*



Grant Stevens
Commissioner of Police

Introduction

Children and young people have a fundamental right to grow up happy and cared for, to be kept safe from harm and to be supported to fulfil their potential.

Families and parents are best placed to support and nurture their children, and have a natural obligation to love, care for and protect them from harm. This extends to the child's mental and physical health, development and happiness.

As a community we also have a collective responsibility for children, intrinsically linked to our ethics, family values and instinct.

The broader system for the care and protection of children and young people plays a critical role in helping to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring. When abuse or neglect do occur, child protection agencies must respond quickly and appropriately to prevent further harm.



The South Australian community was lately rocked by several cases of appalling abuse and neglect, and a tragic death. Recent abhorrent crimes against children who were in state care prompted the government to call for a comprehensive and independent review of child protection in South Australia.

The Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, led by Royal Commissioner Margaret Nyland, delivered its report into the adequacy of the child protection system to the Governor on 5 August 2016. The commission conducted a comprehensive investigation into the laws, policies, practices and structures currently in place for children at risk of harm, including those who are under the guardianship of the minister. As part of its review, the commission heard from 381 witnesses, received 374 submissions, conducted extensive stakeholder engagement and examined over 10,000 documents.

The Royal Commission's report, *The life they deserve*, describes a system in urgent need of reform, pushed beyond capacity and with critical matters slipping through the cracks. The current child protection system fails to tackle a number of interconnected challenges. One in four children will interact with the system by the age of 10, and yet the statutory child protection system only has the capacity to help a small fraction of them. The system misses valuable opportunities to identify families at risk and offer support before they reach crisis point. This gap in prevention leads to an increased need for extreme intervention measures, primarily the removal of children from their parents, and too often children who are in the government's care are not kept safe.

Running throughout the entire Royal Commission report was an emphasis on the best interests of the child, a shift to earlier intervention, finding the right solution for individual circumstances, and the need to take an evidence-based approach.




Royal Commissioner Nyland made extensive recommendations to address these and other issues in the child protection system. This included a recommendation that the South Australian Government provide its initial response to the report by 31 December 2016.

A fresh start not only carries out this recommendation, but goes further to outline a system-level reorientation. Chapter 3 describes the government's focus on wellbeing for all children in South Australia, inspired by a public health approach. It shows our legal child protection responsibilities as part of a broader approach that

promotes the safety and wellbeing of all children. This evidence-based framework shifts our focus from solely responding to abuse to a heightened emphasis on being vigilant at universal touch points with families, and targeted early intervention for our most vulnerable families.

However, when children from these families do face harm, we must have a swift and effective response. Statutory child protection is complex and multifaceted by nature, requiring a holistic approach. As such, Royal Commissioner Nyland's report encourages system-wide change, with an integrated plan for reform.



As a community we can collectively work to protect children and young people from abuse or neglect that affects their physical, emotional, developmental or psychological wellbeing.

Chapter 4 details this system reorientation. It is important to note that the newly formed Department for Child Protection is central to the system, but is just one part of the system. Child protection is everybody's business. Parents, carers, communities and non-government service providers all have critical roles. Furthermore, child protection cases will inevitably overlap with the responsibilities of other government agencies, requiring effective collaboration and continual information sharing. Underlying issues such as ongoing family violence, substance abuse, social barriers and mental illness ultimately involve a range of services, including health, housing, the courts and police. We must all work together to fulfil our collective responsibility to our children and young people.

It is also essential that the revised system balances structure with flexibility. A high-performing system requires a commitment to continual improvement and finding new ways of working. We must be willing to change the system as we learn from experience, and to remove barriers that hinder progress. It is therefore important to establish strong evaluative processes that allow staff to assess outcomes and communicate their learnings to initiate change. This is an integral part of evidence-based practice.

System flexibility in the best interests of the child must also apply in day-to-day operations. Processes, procedures and organisational culture must support the delivery of services that are tailored to individuals. No child or situation is the same, and a child-centred model must incorporate the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. This requires a skilled workforce that is supported to make decisions using their professional judgment.

The reform outlined in this response supports the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children, and therefore must be implemented in a well-considered and planned manner. Many elements are interdependent, making it essential that changes are rolled out with patience and in sequence. Just like building a house, it is imperative that we lay strong foundations, and undertake each element of reform work in a planned and logical order so that our children are better supported each and every year.

The government's general approach to implementation, including the sequencing of reform measures, is summarised in Chapter 5. The principles of implementation include evidence-based decision-making and a commitment to engaging with key partners, children and the community.

This involves testing and piloting reform measures, evaluating outcomes and making adjustments to ensure successful implementation. The recommendations and their implementation must be considered in the context of a framework for change, and with a holistic approach to system-wide reform.

Success will take many forms, and will occur over the long term. Foster and kinship carer numbers will increase over time as we improve standards and support for carers and undertake recruitment. We want to see school attendance, infant health and child homelessness rates improve over time, as government and non-government groups work together to improve the wellbeing of children. Critically, we aim to ultimately reduce intergenerational experiences of child protection. The number of South Australians who have had previous contact with the child protection system whose children also enter care should fall over the next 10-20 years, as we do more to prevent child maltreatment, support children leaving care and break the cycle of abuse and neglect.

However, success like this may be difficult to measure immediately. A number of statistics may move in what we think to be the 'wrong' direction, requiring resilience and a focus on our ultimate vision for children and young people.

We must be prepared, for instance, for the number of notifications of suspected child abuse to increase as new programs are rolled out across the state. We can also predict that the number of children in residential care will increase in the short term, as we relocate children out of commercial and emergency care. And, importantly, we must understand that abuse and neglect will occur in any system, no matter how well it works. It is vital that we do not allow this to sway our commitment to long-term reform. While demand might increase in the short term, outcomes for children in the child protection system will improve as a result of these reforms.

The government will continue to involve the sector and the community on reform measures that affect them. This will include consultation with key partners on the implementation of recommendations, changes to legislation and broader system reform.

Future conversations with these groups will be facilitated through a Reform Implementation Team, responsible for leading ongoing consultation and driving system-level reform.

Chapter 5 also outlines principles for better engagement with Aboriginal families and communities, who are alarmingly over-represented in the child protection system. Approximately one-third of children in out-of-home-care in South Australia are Aboriginal, and Aboriginal children are 10 times more likely to come into contact with the child protection system than non-Aboriginal children. Only through a collaborative approach can we address this issue.

Readers are asked to note that references in this response to Aboriginal children, families and communities refer to people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Lastly, Appendix 1 responds individually to each recommendation from *The life they deserve*.

As a community we can collectively work to protect children and young people from abuse or neglect that affects their physical, emotional, developmental or psychological wellbeing. Improved child-centred practices and strong partnerships are vital to providing better care. Only through integrated and brave reform will we create the dramatic change our system needs.



Chapter 1: A child-friendly state

The birth of a child is a cause for celebration, and is a deeply emotional and personal event for parents.

Every child should be welcomed and loved, has a right to be nurtured to express their individual potential and is a valuable part of our community. However, this is not the experience of all children. The gap between what a child is entitled to at birth and the reality for some children should aggrieve every member of our community.

How we treat each child is the mark of our individual humanity and our compassion as a community. This applies from the happiest or most privileged child, to the most vulnerable or most in need of support.

Allowing children to be children is at the heart of being a child-centric community. This means letting children have fun, play and learn while they grow into healthy, strong and self-reliant adults.

Beyond the immediate family, a range of services and organisations provide support for child development at every point in a child's life. Starting with a pregnant mother's first visit to the doctor and newborn parent support, every child in South Australia should have access to services to guide and encourage their growth towards adulthood.

South Australia has created children's centres that provide integrated services including playgroup, childcare, preschool and allied health services to meet children's health and development needs. There will soon be 47 centres located across the state, providing integral support for parents in their new role. Combining lessons from [Reggio Emilia of learning](#) through play with our unique nature-play approach and outdoor learning spaces, our early childhood services are leading the nation. We will still work harder and do more to invest in the early years.


Our education system is designed to give every child the attention and guidance they need. We fund our schools to explicitly respond to student needs, recognising that education provides children from all backgrounds with a chance to level the playing field and live up to their full potential. While school resourcing is a live debate with the Australian Government, South Australia has long been committed to funding reflecting student needs. Primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors in South Australia each work to support the development of all children to prepare them for the economic and social future they will inherit.

Our public schools have invested in child wellbeing practitioners, who are largely social-work-trained staff. These practitioners work with vulnerable children and their families to improve school engagement and increase safety and stability for children. Public schools are supported with child development workers, including speech therapists and psychologists, who identify and work with students with additional needs.

School attendance and school completion are crucial markers of long-term success. Student attendance rates in our state have climbed, but chronic absenteeism remains a challenge. Our education system is working hard to reduce this through supportive intervention and tougher approaches like prosecution where it is necessary and effective.

School completion rates are soaring in South Australia. Nothing helps young people build a self-reliant future better than having their South Australian Certificate of Education.

Following on from the success of child wellbeing practitioners, and in response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, the government has established child wellbeing assistants in each relevant government department. Child wellbeing

A close-up photograph of a young child with Down syndrome, smiling warmly. The child has light brown hair with bangs and is wearing a grey cardigan over a white shirt. An adult's hand, with red-painted fingernails, is gently holding the child's hand. The background is blurred, showing hints of other people and a colorful environment.

How we treat each child is the mark of our individual humanity and our compassion as a community.

assistants will provide staff in these agencies with guidance about options to support vulnerable families, undertaking this duty in addition to their usual role. We want to help public servants across government to better understand how to deal with the problem and determine the appropriate pathway for vulnerable families and children.

Over recent years, local and state governments have been cooperatively designing physical spaces and

services to be child focused and child friendly. In 2016 we launched **Child Friendly SA**, following a pilot with three local governments – Campbelltown City Council, City of Onkaparinga and Gawler Town Council. The initiative places the youngest third of our population firmly at the centre of planning, service delivery and policy formation, challenging us to refocus services to fully account for the needs and rights of children.



Chapter 2: The voice of the child

Children must be acknowledged as experts in their own lives, and we must take care to view families and services through their eyes.

Children and young people provide important and unique insights into their situation, and can often suggest potential solutions to problems. These views are a powerful addition to the decision-making process.

Many recommendations from the Royal Commission report will directly impact what happens to children. The government has committed to talking to children and young people about what these recommendations mean to them, and how they should be implemented. This will occur in a number of ways including focus groups, working with peak bodies and agencies that deal directly with children and young people, and maintaining an ongoing dialogue with child advocates, such as the Guardian for Children and Young People and the new Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Service providers and on-the-ground staff are critical touch points with children and families, and greater efforts must be made to engage with children in our everyday operations. Staff training and government policies and procedures will be updated to reflect this priority.

We will listen and respond to children and their opinions, thoughts and beliefs. Children will not only have a voice in the paths of their own lives, but they will help us to shape a better system and keep improving.

As described in further detail in this report, children will also be represented in the reform governance structure. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel, which has been established to guide whole-of-system reform, will periodically invite youth representatives to their meetings. Children will also be represented on the panel by the Guardian for Children and Young People and relevant peak bodies.

Through these channels, we will provide children and young people with the ability to influence reform and decisions that affect them, and help adult decision-makers to better understand children's views, ideas and needs.



Chapter 3: A vision for all children

The South Australian Government has a vision for all children, where every child is free to learn, play and develop into the most capable, balanced and confident person they can be.

The Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 outlines a number of guiding principles recognising the importance of children and young people to South Australia. These principles acknowledge that the future of the state is bound tightly to the wellbeing of our children and young people, recognising their value as citizens of South Australia.

As outlined in the Bill, we want every child and young person to:

- be safe from harm
- do well at all levels of learning and to have skills for life
- enjoy a healthy lifestyle
- be active citizens who have a voice and influence.

These values apply to all children and call for a collaborative effort from parents, families,

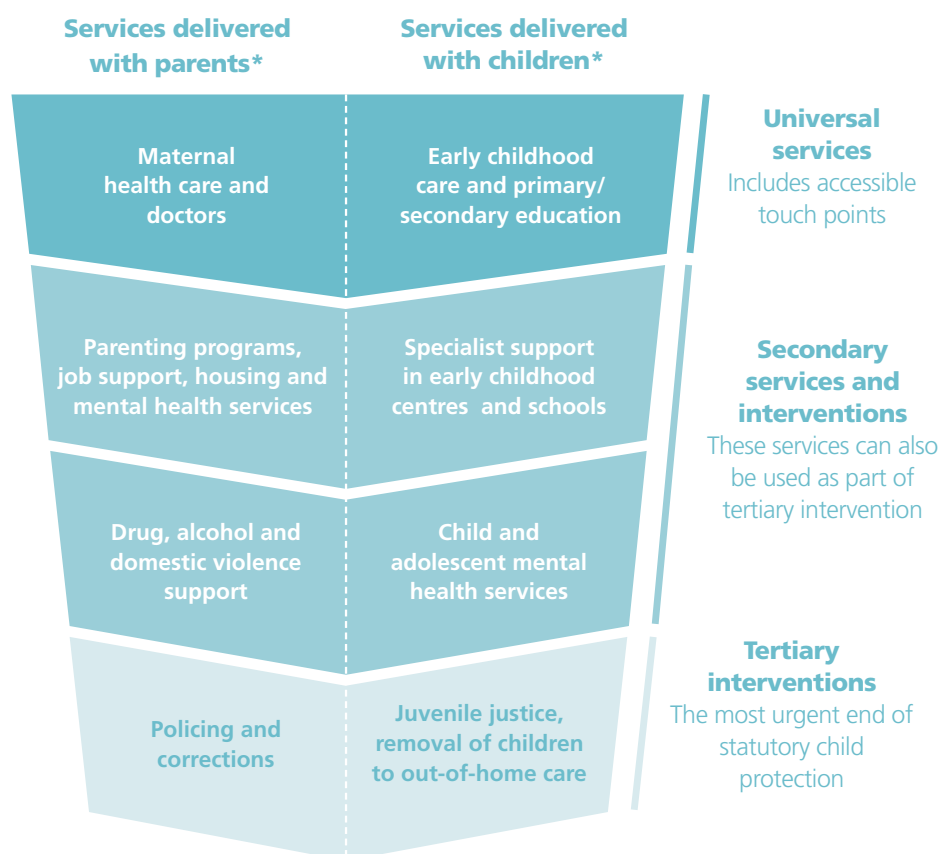
communities, the not-for-profit sector and government.

Realising this vision requires a change in thinking and a reorientation towards a broader **child development system**.

Rather than primarily investing in responding to abuse and neglect after it occurs, we must also allocate resources and effort to prevent child maltreatment. The broader child development system aims to avoid protection measures altogether by changing parent behaviour and addressing the social factors that lead to abuse and neglect. Prevention efforts must recognise and target the complex and often interrelated risk factors that underlie child abuse and neglect, such as mental health, substance abuse, poverty, family violence, social isolation, homelessness and intergenerational trauma. These prevention efforts must be coordinated across government, the non-government sector, and within the community, and will not be the sole responsibility of the Department for Child Protection.



Child development system




**The examples provided in the diagram are not exhaustive. A range of other services are available, provided by both government and non-government agencies.*

As shown in the diagram, the child development system involves three levels of intervention – universal, secondary and tertiary. This model aligns with the **National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020**, a national long-term approach to substantially reduce levels of child abuse and neglect. The concept is widely supported by leading Australian and international experts, and is supported by extensive research. Under the model, significant resources are allocated to prevention and early intervention, building the capacity of parents, families and the community to deal with issues before tertiary interventions, including statutory child protection and removal, are required. Child protection activities in our legislation are not limited to tertiary intervention measures. However, as Royal Commissioner Nyland's report shows, statutory child protection practice in South Australia has generally focused on activities very late in the process.

Compared with other states, South Australia has a high proportion of children who are removed from their biological parents and placed in out-of-home

care, and this number is growing. While there may be a variety of causes for this, including different reporting and intervention thresholds, it indicates that more could be done to change parental behaviour before the statutory child protection system becomes involved. Our ambition is to get on the front foot. This broader system model will help us to identify families at risk, provide support to parents and intervene earlier, meaning that fewer parents will struggle to raise their children.

Universal services target the entire community, and are a starting point for education and early support. These services generally carry fewer stigmas than secondary and tertiary interventions, and are often delivered in everyday settings. A pregnant mother, for example, would generally feel comfortable accessing maternal health programs both before and after giving birth. These services then become a pipeline for advice, education and collaboration with families, providing approachable access points for vulnerable parents to seek help.



*“For sustainable improvements to the quality of life for children at risk of harm, changes are required well beyond statutory functions at both a government and community level.”
The life they deserve.*

As outlined in the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020, strategies and programs targeted at the early years of a child's life, particularly the first 1000 days, can have significant benefits for development. It is also a critical window of time for parents, in which they establish their parental role and face a raft of changes and challenges. Health services are already involved with families during this period, giving them an important role in universal intervention before the child enters the education system.

Every government agency and non-government organisation that provides services and support to families must embrace their role in the child development system, and put children at the centre of their work. While more can be done in this area, some positive steps have already been taken.

Housing SA, for example, recently changed its housing management approach to focus more strongly on the needs of their clients, including identifying vulnerabilities early and pursuing opportunities to assist or engage specialist support. As part of this approach, Housing SA staff must periodically sight all children under 5 that live in public housing, ensure that the needs of children are prioritised in service planning, and deliver services that keep children safe and securely housed.

As a child grows, services can be complemented by early childhood and education systems. These services maintain regular contact with a child from under 5 to 18 years, providing ongoing monitoring of their safety and development. When difficulties arise, schools and childcare facilities must be equipped to provide secondary services, including specialist mentoring and tutoring to assist both the child and their parents.

Within government, the creation of children's centres and the appointment of wellbeing officers in schools have been positive steps in this direction.

Signs of distress can also trigger the involvement of other secondary interventions, such as assistance in parenting, housing, employment, substance abuse or mental health. Confronting and resolving these issues early can set families on an alternative pathway, avoiding the statutory child protection system. Non-government agencies play a critical role in the delivery of these secondary interventions. Not-for-profit and community organisations hold a wealth of expertise and experience, allowing them to provide appropriate responses to specific cases and complexities in their local area.

While implementing this new approach, we must put the child's long-term outcomes at the centre of all decision-making, focusing on their need

for stability, connection with their immediate and extended family, and their mental, emotional and developmental needs. Our engagement with the child protection sector has highlighted the importance of integrating child-inclusive practices into our everyday work. As described previously, we must also give prominence to the child's voice, ensuring that children and young people are involved in the decisions that affect them.

Evidence-based programs

In line with Royal Commissioner Nyland's recommendations, the government has committed to establishing an Early Intervention Research Directorate, responsible for creating and coordinating a five-year whole-of-government prevention and early intervention strategy. The directorate will act as the intersection between data and child protection evidence, evaluation, research, and practice. In collaboration with the academic sector, it will take an evidence-based approach to universal and secondary interventions, providing strategies to help families before they reach crisis point.

The directorate will include a specific focus on Aboriginal children and families. This work will aim to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the state's child protection system through enhanced understanding and culturally suitable approaches to early intervention and prevention.

In *The life they deserve*, Royal Commissioner Nyland urges that our finite resources should be devoted to programs that are effective and supported by evidence.

"Effective service models should be expanded, while less effective ones should be adapted to reflect the best available evidence or lose their funding. It is critical that evaluations collect data on outcomes, not simply activities."

To address this, the directorate's work will inform future funding decisions through its collaborative research and evaluation program. The directorate will develop and manage an ongoing evaluation framework, using existing data and new analytic tools to measure programs and services against desired outcomes. This approach will not only deliver strong outcomes for the child development system, but will also improve the use of new data systems, tools and analysis across government.

More than ever we will test, monitor and evaluate new strategies and services before implementing them. Pilot programs will be used to ensure that we allocate resources to rigorously tested and effective services. If a program does not achieve its objectives at the trial stage, we must be willing to adapt and to move in a different direction.

In a practical sense, this approach will lead to programs and services that successfully address shortcomings in parenting behaviour. It will also better leverage funding outside of the South Australian Government, and lead to a more sustainable funding model.

Investments will be made in programs and solutions that respond to the complexities of individual family circumstances. One size does not fit all. We must devote time and energy to identifying the cause of a person's problem, and target services to meet their needs. Some of these services will be delivered by agencies and organisations outside of the Department for Child Protection, including government, not-for-profit and community groups.

However, in some cases preventative measures and early interventions are not enough.

This is when the statutory child protection system must become involved, to prevent further harm to a child who is experiencing abuse or neglect. These tertiary interventions are a critical part of the overall child development system, providing statutory intervention for our most vulnerable children.

Chapter 4: A new statutory child protection system

When a child experiences abuse or neglect, the statutory child protection system must become involved, using powers under our legislation.

The life they deserve left no question that there were serious deficiencies in the child protection system and that Families SA, the previous child protection agency, was overwhelmed by both the quantity and complexity of their cases. Many of these issues are addressed through Royal Commissioner Nyland's recommendations, which can be found in Appendix 1. However, the extent of the changes suggested in the report must also be addressed through a whole-of-system rethink.

This chapter outlines a reformed system for families and children who may need statutory intervention. The approach has been designed within government, with vital input from leaders of the non-government sector, government agencies, academics and advisers.

Implementing new systems and driving change can be a challenging process, requiring long-term commitment and focus. Reform will not happen overnight, and it is essential that we remain disciplined over the years to come.

Legislative reforms

The South Australian Government has child protection responsibilities and powers under our state's legislation. This is the 'statutory child protection system'. An immediate priority for the government was reviewing the suite of legislation concerning child protection, to ensure that children are comprehensively protected under the law.

As such, the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 is currently open for community and sector consultation, and will replace the *Children's Protection Act 1993* (SA). The Bill reflects the approach taken in *The life they deserve* – that the wellbeing and


protection of children is the paramount consideration in the operation and enforcement of the Act.

A major change proposed by the Bill is that the guardianship function, currently undertaken by the Minister for Education and Child Development under the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, will instead be undertaken by the chief executive of the Department for Child Protection. This will better align South Australia with other jurisdictions with respect to guardianship of children in care.

The Bill promotes permanence and stability for children and young people who have been removed from their parents or guardians. It encourages decisions and actions to be made in a timely manner and, in the case of young children, as early as possible. In addition, the Bill draws attention to alternative options for children who have been removed, placing them in a safe, nurturing, stable and secure environment. Children should be preferentially placed with a person with whom they have a relationship, rather than the guardianship or custody of the chief executive. A strong emphasis is placed on restorative practice and alternative responses to removal, including family group conferences.

The Bill also contains a number of provisions designed to ensure that the child's voice is heard. Under the Bill, children and young people must participate in decision-making, and must have a reasonable opportunity to put their views to the court. The Bill enables the minister to set up a children's visitor scheme, and outlines the rights of children in residential facilities to make complaints.

Furthermore, the Bill provides approved carers with improved rights to exercise delegated powers, to obtain information, and to participate in decision-making about the child in their care. The Bill also makes it easier for approved carers to obtain long-term guardianship orders.



*“It is time for all of us to work together to
give all our children the life they deserve.”*

The life they deserve.

In addition, the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* has implemented recommendations relating to working with children checks. The Act reforms how we undertake these checks in South Australia, ensuring that a person who is assessed as being of high risk to the safety of children is prohibited from working or volunteering with them. Regulations will now be drafted and released for public consultation, which will include more detail about who will need to undertake a working with children check. Further legislation will then be developed to address the implementation of the new system prior to changes coming into effect.

The government has also introduced the Public Sector (Data Sharing) Bill 2016 into Parliament,

which allows government to make data sharing agreements with the Australian Government, other states and territories, local government and non-government organisations. The Bill addresses concerns raised by the Royal Commission that agencies fail to adequately share child protection information, undermining their ability to build a comprehensive picture of risk to a child.

The sophisticated and regular use of data sharing, data linkage and data analytics is imperative to child protection reform and builds a foundation for evidence-based policies and services. By sharing data across government and, where possible, with other non-government agencies, we can improve our understanding of vulnerable children and their families.



The Bill provides the legislative framework to support this, outlining the security protocols to guide data sharing. It also removes previously held concerns about whether it was legal to share certain information.

While the Bill will provide the backbone for improved data sharing, there is also a significant culture barrier to address. This culture change must engage agencies beyond those in statutory child protection. A balance needs to be struck between securely and safely sharing private information and improving the effectiveness and appropriateness of how we support our most vulnerable children and families.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet is leading a proof-of-concept project to support this culture shift. This information sharing project aims to demonstrate what is possible in an affordable and effective way. It will test the capability of government to share information, and the value of linking different data systems across agencies. This will support the evaluation of programs, particularly funding for early intervention and prevention initiatives. It will also inform best practice research work and enable evidence-based decision-making. Ultimately, it aims

to support a better case management approach for vulnerable South Australians, and illustrate how a single solution can be scalable and applicable to a number of complex social service and policy responses.

Increased roles, responsibilities and governance

The future child protection system must be founded in cooperation. Government agencies, non-government organisations and the academic sector all play important roles in a well-functioning and adaptable system. Cross-agency collaboration will become more prominent, making the development of strong partnerships a priority for all parties. The Early Intervention Research Directorate will work with non-government and academic institutions to provide the government with advice on what works and what doesn't. This will help the government and non-government sector to identify where the new system is on track and where changes need to be made.

As described in more depth later in this report, the reform process itself will be overseen by a Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel. This panel will comprise peak bodies and representatives

from the child protection sector, bringing together government and non-government entities to cooperatively guide system reform.

Government will continue to oversee the system and provide the reform agenda, aligning South Australia with the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020. All reform will also be informed by the findings of the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which is currently underway, and build on reform work from previous reviews in South Australia.

Health and education departments will be heavily involved on the front line, providing universal touch points with families, secondary interventions, support to parents and monitoring child development. These and other agencies, such as Housing SA and South Australia Police, also have an important role in supporting interventions suggested by Department for Child Protection staff. The department will take the lead on responding to notifications of potential abuse and identifying appropriate response pathways. They will also continue to manage the overall mix of care placements and oversee out-of-home care.

The non-government sector, which includes community groups and not-for-profit organisations, will continue to provide a range of service responses. This will include some of the system's most important services – coordinating support for foster carers and some residential care, delivering early intervention and prevention programs, and helping children to transition to adulthood. The non-government sector will also play a critical role in delivering place-based solutions and culturally appropriate responses.

The government also recognises that the general community plays a large and integral role in the new child protection system. Families maintain the primary responsibility for bringing up children and ensuring children have opportunities to thrive, learn and contribute to society. The South Australian community needs to continue to support families in that role, and escalate matters when a child may be at risk.

"The agency tasked with primary responsibility for child protection needs a fresh start."

The life they deserve.

A new department

A strong child protection system requires an effective, transparent and highly skilled statutory department. Respected and strategic leadership, robust governance and a stable organisational structure are essential to achieve this.

The creation of the Department for Child Protection and the appointment of Cathy Taylor as the new chief executive provides an exciting opportunity to design a high-functioning child protection agency. Many recommendations from *The life they deserve* will be delivered by the department, supported by broader improvements to organisational culture and operational efficacy.

Staff will be supported in their difficult and challenging work, and will be provided with the training opportunities needed to maintain a skilled and experienced workforce. Simple and accessible systems, streamlined processes and procedures and continuous improvement will be priorities for the new department. There will also be a heightened focus on clear and collaborative communication with partners and the community, as detailed further below.

All these elements are required to enable the department to perform at its best and to raise the confidence of stakeholders, the community and agency staff in the statutory system.

Improved model to receive and respond to notifications

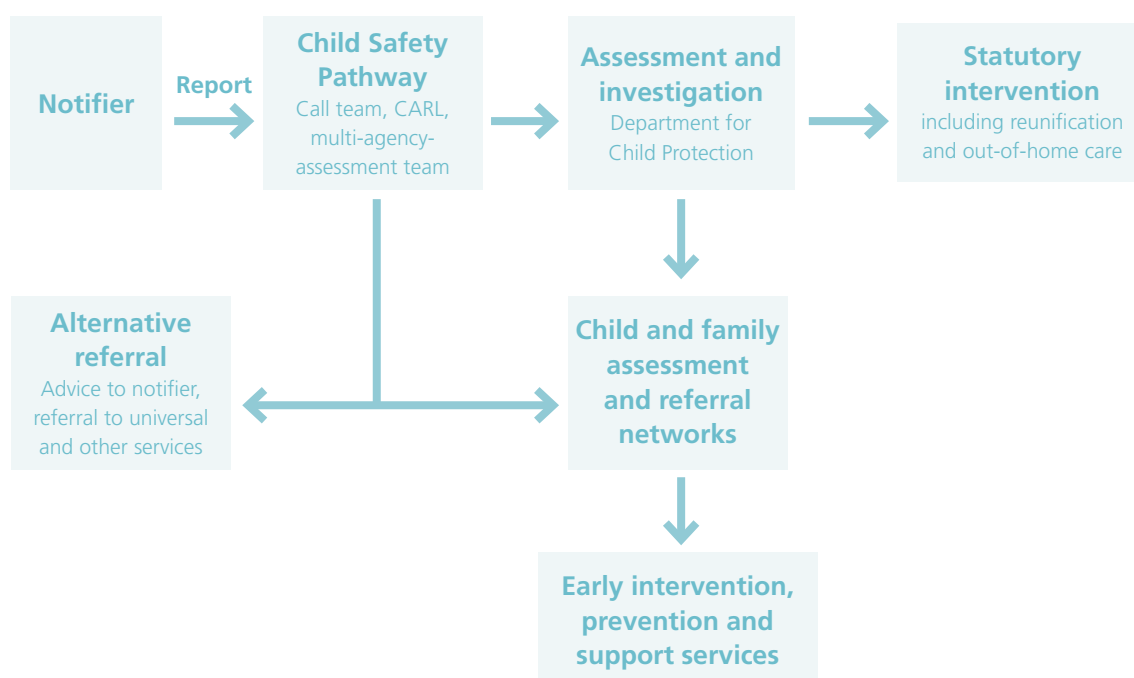
A high-functioning child protection system encourages meaningful notifications about suspected abuse and neglect of children, records and investigates them quickly and takes the required actions to keep children safe.

This requires a streamlined, efficient and aware system. The community must understand when they need to notify the department about their concerns, and the department must have robust processes and accurate tools to inform assessments of a child's situation. People tasked with investigating a child's circumstance must be knowledgeable and trained in understanding risk factors, family dynamics and appropriate decision-making.

Every child that interacts with the system is different and must be provided with a response that meets their needs. Our responses must better consider

alternate pathways that address the family and child's needs.

The design of the new child protection system aims to increase efficiency, broaden referral pathways, provide better and timelier outcomes, and avoid the double-handling of cases. The future system will also be based on a foundation of research and evidence through the Early Intervention Research Directorate. Interventions will be trialled and tested, and decisions will be based on evidence about what works for children and families.



A major feature of the model is a new 'front door' to the system, with the introduction of the Child Safety Pathway. The new pathway is a multi-agency intake model that can offer a broader child protection and development approach to finding appropriate responses to families and children at risk. The multi-agency team will include the Department for Child Protection practitioners who currently staff the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) and staff from SA Health, the Department for Education and Child Development, South Australia Police, the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, and the Department for Correctional Services.

When a notification is made, assessments and investigations are initiated based on a system of demand. Some matters that do not receive an initial investigation will be re-notified again and again until they meet the threshold for intervention. This is not a sustainable system. We want to provide a response to families and children earlier, preventing matters from escalating to the point of statutory intervention. The new pathway allows families to be referred to the services they need early, when they might otherwise have fallen through the gaps. This model relies on a strong support referral network and a coordinated response. In response

to Royal Commissioner Nyland's recommendation, child and family assessment and referral networks will be established to provide this referral pathway. The networks will coordinate services at a local level and connect children and families with support services suitable to their needs. These referrals will be supported by the work of the Early Intervention Research Directorate, which will provide the evidence base to ensure we are investing in services that work.

As part of our commitment to evidence-based practice, a 12-month trial of referral networks will begin in 2017. The trial will begin with three pilot sites in the north, central and south Adelaide metropolitan areas. Due to initial capacity restrictions at these sites, the trial will focus on children in the first 1000 days of their lives, from prenatal to 24 months of age.

Referral networks will supply families with better access to existing universal and secondary services, and some new services where supported by robust evidence. This could include drug

and alcohol treatment programs, mental health support, children's services, housing, health and education. This is where strong, collaborative partnerships must be built between government, not-for-profit organisations and other community service providers.

Non-government agencies are integral to effective referral pathways, and have significant responsibilities in the delivery of services. This delivery must be coordinated, understanding that one family may access a range of support services. A single family, for instance, may require financial planning assistance while also accessing housing support and participating in a substance abuse program. The networks will be staffed by social workers who can coordinate and manage families to ensure they are engaging with services.

In the long run, these referral pathways will provide a response to a greater number of children who need help, not just the most urgent and serious notifications.



A commitment will be made to working with Aboriginal leaders and not-for-profit organisations to ensure that referral pathways and services are culturally appropriate and meet the needs of Aboriginal children and their families. In particular, case workers, investigators and child protection partners must understand the fundamental principles of working with Aboriginal families.

By working together we can ensure that children do not slip through the cracks, and that we support families to meet each child's physical, emotional, mental and developmental needs.

Out-of-home care

When it is determined that a child cannot remain with their biological parents, the child will be removed to out-of-home care. This is a critical part of the child protection system, designed for our most vulnerable children. Foster and kinship carers provide children and young people with stability and nurture, holding the power to positively alter a child's future.

Our child protection system will prioritise family-based care environments. Connections with kin and family will be maintained and promoted whenever it is in the child's best interests. Where this isn't possible, other care environments will be therapeutic and focused on helping children to be the best they can. Services must be flexible, adaptable and designed to address the trauma related issues many children face.

Consultation with the family-based out-of-home care sector has highlighted the need for change. The system cannot function effectively unless carers feel supported, respected and empowered. Foster and kinship carers have expressed difficulty dealing with government, and describe relationships that lack cooperation and recognition. Addressing this issue is a key priority.


New carer relationship managers will be employed by the Department for Child Protection to help carers to navigate the department and provide support dealing with government processes and procedures. Relationship managers will provide carers with information about their rights and responsibilities, support better day-to-day decision-making arrangements and ensure that the contributions of carers are valued.

The Department for Child Protection is working closely with carers to conduct a targeted internal review of kinship and foster care. This review aims to find ways to better support and promote family-based out-of-home care for children. It focuses on the needs of foster, kinship and specific child-only carers, creating strategies to better attract, retain and support them in their vital work. Key stakeholders and current carers have participated in forums and have provided their insights and input on family-based care for children in South Australia. Regional forums have similarly been offered, and will proceed subject to interest.

The department's recently launched advertising campaign, Choose to Care, focuses strongly on foster care recruitment. The campaign highlights the positive difference that foster and kinship carers make to the lives of vulnerable children, and encourages more people to open their homes. The campaign is already producing positive results, and will continue on various platforms until late 2017 including TV, newspapers, social media and cinema advertising.

The government is also committed to increasing the capacity and capabilities of Aboriginal non-government organisations, and to working with them to deliver the best care outcomes for Aboriginal children.





“Foster [and kinship] parents play an important role in the care and protection of children who can no longer safely live with their families.”

The life they deserve.

There has been a gap between the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the child protection system and capacity in the Aboriginal non-government sector. Furthermore, *The life they deserve* described a “critical shortage of suitable Aboriginal carers”, creating difficulties in placing Aboriginal children with Aboriginal families and communities.

The Royal Commission report further describes this gap, noting that:

“there are limits to the capacity of Aboriginal communities to care for all Aboriginal children in care, and to the number of children for whom a carer can provide safe care. ... While the agency should strive wherever possible to place Aboriginal children with family and community, an increasing number will require non-Aboriginal carers.”

The safety of the child is paramount and if no suitable Aboriginal carer can be found for an Aboriginal child, then it is likely they will be placed with a non-Aboriginal carer. However, increased efforts will be made to identify appropriate carers earlier. Additionally, there will be increased efforts to up skill Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal carers to maintain crucial cultural connections.

In the long run, flexible models of care will be developed to meet the full range of children’s needs. The new system will incorporate a mix of care placements based around large numbers of high quality carers. Carers will receive better support and there will be improved standards for residential care.

An initial goal of the new system will be to increase numbers of foster and kinship carers and reduce the number of children in commercial care, including emergency accommodation. It is a priority that the number of children in commercial and emergency care is reduced, as this environment provides the least support and stability to children and their developmental needs. As this transition occurs we can expect to see an increase in children in residential care. When commercial care accommodation is reduced, children will be moved into foster care arrangements where possible.

However, while foster care numbers are being addressed, children may be moved into residential care instead.

The government is committed to increasing the support and safety for children in both residential and commercial care. While there are still children in commercial care, the Department for Child Protection will significantly expand the Intensive Placement Support Team to provide governance and supervision to those placements. The Department for Child Protection will also continue its efforts to increase safety measures for residential care staff, including rigorous screening and vetting processes, training, professional support and the use of probationary periods, as recommended in *The life they deserve*. These preventative measures will be reinforced by a Care Concern Management Reform project, which will implement a number of the recommendations in *The life they deserve*. This project will ensure that any concerning behaviour that does occur towards children in out-of-home-care is reported and responded to appropriately and swiftly.

More also needs to be done for young people arriving at the end of out-of-home-care placements, typically at age 18. Young adulthood is a critical time for all South Australians, but none more so than young people leaving care. Many need assistance to make the transition from care to adult life, as their

needs shift from protection to housing, health care, further education or employment assistance.

This support is critical to break the cycle of child abuse from one generation to the next. We must establish support mechanisms for all children who have been in care to ensure they become thriving citizens and future parents.

Agencies responsible for these services must renew and galvanise their commitment to support care leavers, in close partnership with the Department for Child Protection. Housing, health, education and training in particular must endeavour to make the transition to adulthood as seamless and stress-free as possible. This includes services that are assertive, consistent and flexible to the diverse needs of these young people. The government will be investing more into service providers that support children transitioning from care.

Sometimes smoothing the path will require modified carer payments or the assistance of specialised case workers. To address this, the government has committed to assisting care leavers to pursue further education by extending payments to their carers where appropriate. This will help carers to support young people who want to undertake post-secondary school education, including university, TAFE and apprenticeships.



The government is also funding a pilot intensive support program for vulnerable care leavers, aligning with recommendation 169 in *The life they deserve*. The program will assist young people navigate the transition from care, providing them with the skills and knowledge required of any person moving out of home for the first time.

This phase of care and guidance requires the involvement of a range of agencies, both government and non-government, to give young people coming out of care the best chance of a settled and fulfilling life.

Complaints and review process

A robust complaints and review process is critical to the success of our child protection system.

In October 2016, in accordance with recommendations in *The life they deserve*, Parliament passed the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016*. The Act addresses gaps in the oversight of children and young people in South Australia and improves advocacy for the interests of all children and young people. The Act also addresses issues surrounding the monitoring, referral and review of matters affecting children and system-level issues.

Importantly, the Act establishes the office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People. The commissioner exists for all children. Their primary role is to promote and advocate for the rights of all children and young people in South Australia, and to inquire into systemic issues that impact children. The commissioner is also tasked with engaging children in the process of making decisions affecting their lives, undertaking research and publishing reports.

Under the Act, the Guardian for Children and Young People retains all of their previous powers and functions. Their primary role is to advocate for the interests of children and young people who are under the guardianship of the minister.

The guardian has responsibilities relating to individual cases, and will respond to concerns raised by children and young people in care, or by their advocates. They also have the power to launch inquiries into individual cases.

The Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee continues under the Act. The committee reviews cases in which children die or are seriously injured, and can recommend legislative or administrative changes that may help prevent similar cases from occurring in the future. It also maintains a database of cases, and reviews cases that are suspected to be due to abuse or neglect, may have been prevented by a system-level change, or if the child was in care at the time.

The Act also establishes a new Child Development Council, which replaces the previous Council for the Care of Children. The council's role will be to prepare and maintain the Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People and advise the government on the effectiveness of the Outcomes Framework.

The Act details a number of referral mechanisms, ensuring a thorough and transparent process. The guardian and the review committee can both refer matters to the commissioner on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, the commissioner and guardian may make a complaint to the Ombudsman or to the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner on behalf of a child or group. The commissioner, the guardian and the review committee are required to escalate matters relating to professional misconduct, corruption or maladministration to the Office for Public Integrity or to the relevant regulator.

In addition, the *Ombudsman Act 1972* and the *Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004* have been amended so that the Ombudsman has jurisdiction to investigate prescribed child protection complaints, and so that the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner refers on to the Ombudsman most complaints of this type that it receives.

A number of other recommendations in *The life they deserve* will increase accountability and the complaints and review processes accessible to children and young people, and the community. Information packages will be developed to ensure children and young people, and the community are aware of their rights and the avenues available.

Chapter 5: Next steps – the implementation approach

In *The life they deserve*, Royal Commissioner Nyland emphasised the importance of a ‘staged and strategic’ approach to implementation that supports and engages staff and stakeholders. To that end, she identified that implementation should be continuous, multi-agency, collaborative, transparent, robust and independently reviewed. She also advised that the government should realistically assess future reforms and outline what can be reasonably achieved in the short, medium and long term. As part of this, the government should provide support to ensure that change is adequately managed.

The report makes a compelling case for change and also presents a number of challenges for planning implementation. Many of the recommendations have significant and far-reaching implications for the way child protection is delivered in South Australia. Current child protection responsibilities must continue to be delivered while recommendations and changes are implemented, ensuring continuity of care throughout the reform process.

All reform must align with the following principles:

- outcome-focused
- collaborative
- evidence-based
- transparent
- achievable.

We must engage effectively with children and young people, families, staff and key partners, and work across multiple government agencies and with the non-government sector. Implementation will occur against a backdrop of significant public interest and high expectations for improvement. We need to demonstrate improvement while also being realistic about the time needed to generate sustainable change.

Significant community and stakeholder engagement has occurred as part of formulating the government

response, involving government staff, families, non-government organisations and Aboriginal community leaders. Key partners have requested further engagement as implementation planning is undertaken.

Reform Implementation Team

To ensure cross-agency, integrated, effective and sustainable implementation, a Reform Implementation Team will be established from 1 January 2017. While the majority of recommendations are the responsibility of the Department for Child Protection, the response requires commitment, collaboration and input from multiple government and non-government agencies. For this reason, the implementation team will work closely with government and non-government agencies to drive reform.

The implementation team will:

- drive the implementation of reforms across government and the non-government sector
- monitor, track and report on progress
- lead ongoing engagement with key partners and other stakeholders
- identify and manage risks to successful implementation
- ensure benefits and outcomes for children and young people are realised.

Reporting

Recommendation 260 sets out how the government should update the South Australian community on the progress of implementation. The initial government response, contained within this document, was due by the end of 2016. A progress update is required by 30 June 2017, and then annually for five years. The reporting timeline recognises that reform will take many years to achieve.



Report	Due by
Initial government response	31 December 2016
Progress report	30 June 2017
Progress report	30 June 2018
Progress report	30 June 2019
Progress report	30 June 2020
Progress report	30 June 2021
Progress report	30 June 2022

Community and stakeholder engagement

The South Australian Government is committed to engaging the community and stakeholders in decisions that affect them. This commitment is expressed in the government's Better Together principles of engagement.

The International Association for Public Participation

provides a framework for engagement that includes five levels: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering.

The table below outlines how the community and stakeholders can expect to be engaged. Key stakeholders include children and young people, child protection workers, carers, government agencies, non-government agencies and community groups.

	Purpose	Commitment
Inform	To provide information to the public, assisting them to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and solutions	We will regularly report on the progress of recommendations through the Department for Childs Protection's website
Consult	To gain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions	We will offer opportunities to make comments and provide feedback via yourSAy
Involve	To work directly with key partners to ensure that their concerns and ideas are consistently understood and considered	We will provide opportunities to participate in focus groups and other engagement activities to consider specific reforms
Collaborate	To work with key partners to identify solutions	We will facilitate working groups to identify issues and develop solutions to support implementation planning
Empower	To engage key partners in decision-making	We will enact transparent and inclusive decision-making processes





Engaging with Aboriginal families and communities

We understand and accept the fundamental importance of working with Aboriginal communities to achieve lasting, positive change.

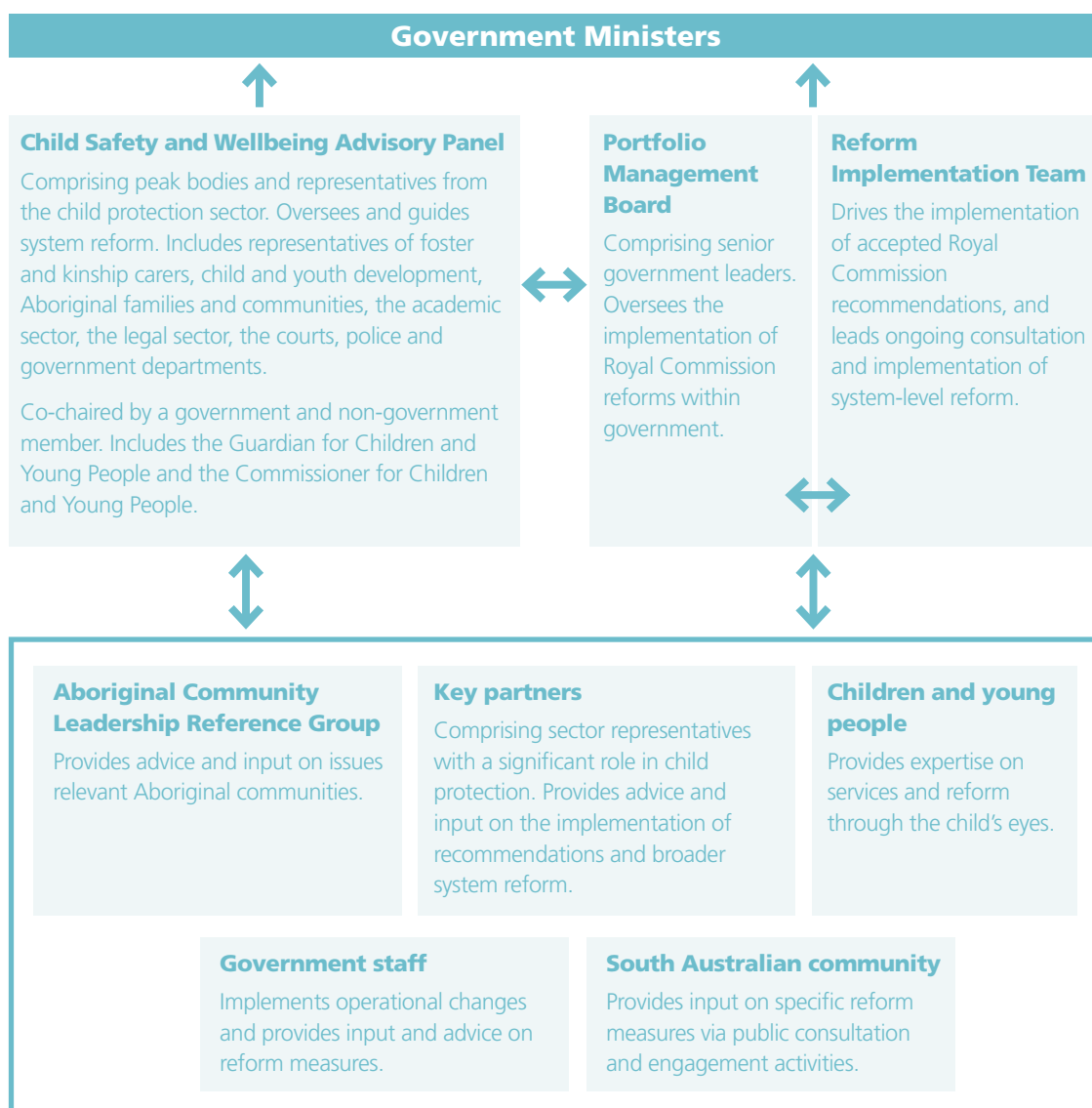
A key principle identified by our key partners is the concept of meaningful engagement. Aboriginal organisations and community leadership have articulated the importance of creating meaningful space for participation in the implementation of the Royal Commission recommendations and the importance of children, young people and community voices in shaping the way forward. This includes the need for an overarching, ongoing strategy for engagement with key stakeholders and government decision-makers directly involved in the process. It is proposed that the Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel (outlined later) would lead this partnership.

An Aboriginal Community Leadership Reference Group has been established to represent the needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities, and to act as a key point of reference for advice and guidance to the government in the development and implementation of actions to address the Royal Commission recommendations and broader system reform. The government will work with the Aboriginal Community Leadership Reference Group to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children at all points of the child protection system.

Consultation will also be undertaken with the communities of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja Lands about the implementation of the reforms. There are important language and cultural considerations to be factored into this consultation, in addition to challenges of remoteness and associated resourcing and logistics. To ensure it is effective, the engagement will be designed and undertaken in consultation with community leadership and associated community organisations.

Despite the considerable efforts of communities, the government and service providers in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja Lands, the barriers to achieving lasting, positive change cannot be underestimated. Fundamental to the success of this consultation will be a genuine and respectful engagement of community leadership, and a willingness of all involved to challenge current thinking and develop new approaches to these complex issues.

Consistent with the Child Development System, improved outcomes for child protection in these communities will not be achieved without regard for improvements in broader aspects of social, cultural and economic wellbeing, requiring a deep consideration of the operation and effectiveness of existing programs and initiatives.



Governance

Effective governance is key to successful implementation. The governance and engagement framework above outlines the interactions that will occur between major stakeholders and government.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel is the mechanism for non-government and government bodies to form a genuine partnership to tackle child protection reform. The panel will ensure cooperation between child protection parties, and will develop a shared vision for a robust and functional system.

The panel will be co-chaired by a government and non-government representative, and will be largely comprised of peak body and government department representatives. The panel will:

- guide reform implementation

- monitor and advise on the system-level impacts of reform
- track progress towards improved outcomes for children and families
- promote shared leadership, commitment and cooperation to create a better child protection system for South Australia.

The panel will report directly to government ministers. Minutes from advisory panel meetings will be published on the Department for Child Protection's website.

Children and young people will be represented on the advisory panel, either through a youth attendee, by the Guardian for Children and Young People or by an appropriate peak body. They will also be engaged by the Reform Implementation Team on the implementation of specific changes and programs.

The Portfolio Management Board is an internal group of senior government executives. The board will oversee the government's ongoing response and implementation of reform measures, and will report regularly to both the Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel and government ministers.

As described earlier, the Aboriginal Community Leadership Reference Group will advise the board and the advisory panel particularly on issues relevant to Aboriginal communities. The advisory panel will include a member from the Aboriginal Community Leadership Reference Group to ensure the voice of the Aboriginal community is represented.

Key partners will have an advisory function relating to the implementation of recommendations as it affects them. They will receive regular updates on reform measures and consultation opportunities through the Reform Implementation Team. Key partners can also provide input to their peak body representative on the Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel.

Other governance and consultation mechanisms, such as the formation of topic based working groups, will be established as required to support implementation planning and will include the stakeholders and organisations that will be impacted by the reform.

Implementation roadmap

Staged implementation

The implementation team will develop an integrated and achievable five-year implementation plan, to immediately begin reorienting the system. As implementation progresses, unintended consequences, interdependencies and other considerations may require recommendations and projects to be re-prioritised.

Implementation will occur in phases, promoting a logical and sequenced approach. These phases will account for the interdependencies of many reform measures, and will ensure that new programs and responses work before they are rolled out across the state. We will test and pilot new initiatives, and work with the not-for-profit, academic and community sectors to implement reform based on the best available evidence.

Phase 1

Phase 1 initiatives lay the foundations for the new system and pilot key parts of the new operating model. Those initiatives include:

- establishing a new Department for Child Protection, with improved learning and development opportunities for staff
- establishing the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People
- introducing new governance arrangements for reform, working across the government and non-government sectors
- releasing a suite of legislative reforms, including the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016
- establishing the Early Intervention and Research Directorate, facilitating a new approach to cross-agency, evidence-based service delivery
- increasing investment in prevention and early intervention services
- establishing a pilot of a new multi-agency intake model, the Child Safety Pathway
- establishing three pilot Child and Family Assessment and Referral Network locations
- forming a Protective Intervention Backlog Team to reduce the pressure and 'churn' within the Department for Child Protection
- developing improved kinship and foster care strategies
- establishing a dedicated family scoping unit within the Department for Child Protection
- establishing a Child Protection Service Unit at the Lyell McEwin Hospital
- increasing funding for post-care services.

It is also critical that we promote culture change in the new Department for Child Protection and across government, building an organisation that focuses on improvement, learning and the development of its people's skills.

Further phases of reform will be implemented progressively, learning from the results of phase 1 pilot programs. Future decisions will be based on the evaluation of these programs along with evidence from the sector and academic sources. Government will report on the timing and completion of these activities in accordance with recommendation 260.

Appendix 1: Schedule of recommendations and status from *The life they deserve*

Are you interested in a particular topic or theme? You can search for recommendations using keywords and subject tags on the Department for Child Protection's website: www.childprotection.sa.gov.au

#	Recommendation	Government position
1	Establish a protocol to govern eligibility for a grant of legal aid to carers, where the child's best interests would be better or more appropriately secured by obtaining Family Court orders, rather than by proceedings in the Youth Court. Further, that funding be provided to the Legal Services Commission and quarantined for this specific purpose.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>A consultation process will need to occur involving the Federal Circuit Court, the Family Court, the Legal Services Commission and other relevant partners in developing an appropriate protocol which gives effect to the intention of this recommendation.</p> <p>Further, the Commonwealth Government provides the Legal Services Commission with funding to be used for family law proceedings and other 'Commonwealth law matters'. As such, the government will request the Commonwealth Government to provide funding to cover any matters which come within that protocol.</p>	
2	Fund, subject to a protocol, any required filing costs where there is a need for Youth Court orders to be registered in the Family Court to improve the safety of the children to whom they relate.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The government accepts that there are instances in which it is appropriate to register a Youth Court order in the Family Court in order to improve the safety of the child to which it relates and that it may be appropriate to modify the criteria governing eligibility for a grant of legal aid in such matters, so that it is easier for a carer to obtain a grant of legal aid, and therefore a certificate which waives the court filing fee.</p> <p>The Federal Circuit Court or Family Court currently waives its filing fee where a person has obtained a grant of legal aid.</p> <p>The government accepts that a protocol should be developed to identify the criteria that would apply where a person wants to register a Youth Court order in the Family Court in order to improve the safety of the child for which the order relates. It is the Commonwealth Government, rather than the state government, that provides the Legal Services Commission with funding for applications made in the Family Court and other 'Commonwealth law matters'. The South Australian Government will request the Commonwealth Government to provide specific funding to cover the matters that come within the protocol.</p>	

3	Support and promote for action, recommendation 5(a) of the Family Law Council interim report (June 2015), which advocates for the development of a national database of child protection and Family Court orders.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Family Law Council's final report, published by the Federal Attorney-General since the release of <i>The life they deserve</i>, reiterates its advocacy for the development of a national database for child protection and Family Court orders.</p> <p>The creation of a national database has been advocated for in many states and territories – for example the establishment of a national database was also recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence (Victoria).</p> <p>The South Australian Government supports the development of a national database of child protection and Family Court orders, as proposed by the Family Law Council, and will promote this issue for action at COAG.</p>		
4	Reinstitute the court liaison role (CLR) as a strategic link between the agency, the Family Court and the Youth Court, to improve system interface and to develop service responses in accordance with the requirements of each jurisdiction.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The court liaison role was reinstituted in the form of the Court Services and Liaison Team within the Department for Child Protection. The team became operational in August 2016.</p> <p>This team is currently providing valuable support to case workers and social workers across the Department for Child Protection. The team is responsible for managing the relationship and strategic links between the department and the Youth Court.</p> <p>Further work will be undertaken to develop the role of this team in managing and strengthening strategic links between the department and the Family Court.</p>		
5	Move the Office of Child Protection and the functions of Families SA out of the Department for Education and Child Development to establish a separate department that has the business of child protection as its primary focus, and which has elements and functions as set out in this report.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this interim recommendation on 21 June 2016.</p> <p>The new Department for Child Protection was established on 1 November 2016. The functions of Families SA were moved out of the Department for Education and Child Development and into the new agency, which has child protection as its primary focus.</p> <p>To make the transition as seamless as possible, the new department has retained Families SA's contact numbers.</p> <p>For more information on the new department visit www.childprotection.sa.gov.au</p>		

6	Appoint a chief executive of the new department who has strong leadership skills and recognised credibility in child protection work, and who has a direct line of ministerial responsibility.	Accepted
		Completed
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this interim recommendation on 21 June 2016. After an international search, Cathy Taylor was announced as the new chief executive of the stand-alone Department for Child Protection on 14 September 2016. Ms Taylor commenced as chief executive on 31 October 2016. For more information about Ms Taylor visit www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/departments/chief-executive-child-protection	
7	Implement a structure in the new department that reduces the hierarchies between leadership and front-line workers.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this interim recommendation on 21 June 2016. As an order of priority, the chief executive, Department for Child Protection has been tasked with reviewing and implementing a flatter structure, where streamlined communication between executive and frontline workers is encouraged.	
8	Establish a refreshed leadership in the new department with emphasis on the attraction and retention of leaders who have recognised credibility in child protection work, and who have the capacity to lead a major reform of organisational culture.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this interim recommendation on 21 June 2016. The new Chief Executive, Cathy Taylor, commenced 31 October 2016. Ms Taylor has extensive experience in child protection work, and in leading major organisational change. Ms Taylor's appointment is just the first step towards establishing a refreshed leadership. In addition, through the machinery of government changes enacted to create the new Department for Child Protection, a process of refreshed leadership structures and positions has commenced with three senior executive leadership positions for finance, human resources and ICT advertised on 15 October 2016. Ms Taylor, with assistance from the newly established human resources department, will continue to drive this process into the new year.	
9	Review the delegation of powers to enable decision making to occur at the closest possible level to the child, subject to questions of fiscal responsibility and sensitivity or complexity of the issues.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. As an order of priority, the chief executive, Department for Child Protection has been tasked with reviewing who can make decisions within the agency, and identifying opportunities to enable decision making to occur at the closest possible level to the child.	

10	Adopt a policy that gives a child's caseworker the primary responsibility for case management and, except in special circumstances, ensures that the caseworker is made aware of all discussions and decisions that affect the child.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The chief executive, Department for Child Protection has been tasked with adopting the policy recommended by the Royal Commission, and ensuring that the policy translates into practice. The chief executive will be required to regularly report on progress towards recommendation 10 in the manner outlined by the Royal Commission in recommendation 260.</p>	
11	Conduct a formal review of Solution Based Casework™ (SBC) to critically examine whether the model is being used with fidelity to the original model in practice.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection commenced an SBC evaluation project on 28 September 2016. A key component of the project is to evaluate whether the model is being used with fidelity to the original model in practice.</p> <p>The evaluation will involve consultation with practitioners, supervisors, managers and staff from the Quality and Practice Directorate to identify ways SBC has improved practice and better understand the challenges that may result in the model not being appropriately applied.</p> <p>Findings of the evaluation project will be discussed with the model developer as part of the ongoing adaption of the model for use in South Australia.</p>	
12	Provide an ongoing SBC consultation and training service to be delivered by principal social work staff and appropriately accredited trainers in SBC who remain within the agency.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Principal social workers in the Department for Child Protection are currently responsible for implementation of the SBC practice model and providing a consultation service to staff where required. Training is delivered by appropriately accredited trainers in the learning and development unit.</p> <p>The refreshed learning and development unit, Department for Child Protection in response to recommendation 24 has been tasked with reviewing the training needs of staff across Department for Child Protection.</p>	

13	Audit the range of process and policy documents to identify and discard those that are out of date. Develop a single database that is accessible to all staff via the agency's intranet, to electronically file all current documents.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>In May 2015, a review of all Department for Child Protection process and policy documentation began. The primary purpose of this review is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify all policy documentation that is no longer relevant or is out of date and decommission them• identify opportunities for rationalisation of policy documentation• improve and further develop current policy documentation• re-categorise and rename documentation to make it easier to find and access the information and guidance that front line workers require. <p>All current policy documentation is stored on and accessible via the departmental intranet.</p> <p>A reviewed and streamlined set of policy documentation will be delivered by late-2017 and work to develop a single online database will begin during that period.</p>		
14	Employ administrative assistants at adequate levels of expertise to support casework teams to manage the administrative requirements of C3MS.	Not accepted
		N/A
REASON		
<p>The South Australian Government does not accept this recommendation.</p> <p>While the administrative requirements of case workers to record notes on C3MS can be time intensive, employing administrative assistants to undertake data entry and administrative C3MS tasks would not significantly reduce the office-based requirements of case workers.</p> <p>Instead it will create an additional layer of information exchange that may lead to key information about children and families being lost, miscommunicated or misinterpreted when uploaded by individuals not involved in the case.</p> <p>It may also result in double handing and only minimal efficiency gains, as case workers will still be required to type up or write the similar notes before they are uploaded by others.</p> <p>Based on the outcomes of the review of C3MS identified in recommendation 20 and other potential enhancements recommended in 15, 16, 17 and 19, it may be appropriate to consider administrative support for C3MS or an alternative database at a later date.</p>		

15	Develop clear guidelines for recording information on C3MS, which identify those responsible for data entry and the categories under which data is entered. Rationalise available categories to limit inappropriate categorisation of important information.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review initiated in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>A number of guidelines are available to Department for Child Protection staff about C3MS and the recording of information.</p> <p>These guidelines will be reviewed to ensure they are up to date and have specific information regarding who is responsible for recording what information, a rationalisation of categories, and detailed information about the purpose and use of categories.</p> <p>Current C3MS training will be reviewed and updated to ensure it provides relevant information regarding new categories and roles and responsibilities. This is discussed further in the response to recommendation 16.</p>		
16	Develop training in the use of C3MS to ensure that practitioners understand their obligations in uploading data, and the limitations of the incident-based nature of recording.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review initiated in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>The update and rationalisation of C3MS categories and updating of guides about the recording and uploading of information will inform the changes to current training regarding obligations in uploading data. This work is discussed further in the response to recommendation 15.</p> <p>Review and reform of C3MS training will ensure that obligations in uploading data and recording information, and the limitations of the incident-based nature of recording are covered in future training. C3MS training is currently mandatory for all staff using the system.</p>		

17	Provide practitioners with mobile devices to allow access to C3MS from remote locations.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review initiated in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>In many situations, the availability of C3MS on mobile devices such as phones or tablets would increase efficiency and facilitate better and more responsive relationships between case workers and children and families.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is currently investigating software solution options that ensure information security is maintained, worker interfaces with applications are easy to use and benefits for case workers and other staff are realised. An example of a potential app being assessed for adoption is iApply, an online forms and workflow automation solution.</p> <p>Additional solutions and apps will be evaluated to identify the most appropriate option.</p>		
18	Permit stakeholders such as other government agencies and not-for-profit organisations limited access to C3MS to facilitate cooperation, collaboration and transparency.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review initiated in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>Providing other government agencies and not-for-profit organisations varying levels of access to C3MS will lead to improved availability and sharing of information and therefore better outcomes for families and children receiving services from multiple partners.</p> <p>To define and design varying levels of access to C3MS, scoping and investigation work is required to identify key partners who would be granted access and determine the most appropriate and feasible technological solutions.</p>		
19	Set constructive and practical benchmarks for the development of critical enhancements to C3MS.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review initiated in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>The setting of constructive and practical benchmarks for the development of critical enhancements in C3MS is contingent on the result of the C3MS review in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection currently plans changes and enhancements to C3MS using an annual planning cycle. Dependent on the results of the review, this system will be reviewed and benchmarks for C3MS set.</p>		

20	Conduct a review of the long-term viability of C3MS, and monitor research and developments in the area of electronic information management systems with a view to determining whether C3MS should be replaced with a more suitable and effective electronic information system.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>An external review of the long-term viability of C3MS will begin in 2017.</p> <p>The review will involve assessing the current effectiveness of data management, identifying possible improvements, and rigorous research of data systems in other jurisdictions. The review will determine whether C3MS has the capability to meet future child protection system needs and identify options for alternative systems if required. Consultation with users of C3MS will be undertaken.</p> <p>The outcomes of this review may influence whether recommendations 15 to 19 are fully accepted and implemented.</p>	
21	Establish a human resources unit in the agency that has sufficient specialist expertise and resources to develop and implement strategic workforce plans and to manage operational demands to ensure high quality child protection practice.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions for a human resources unit were incorporated into the resourcing for the new Department for Child Protection, which was established on 1 November 2016.</p> <p>The role of director, human resources unit, Department for Child Protection, was advertised on 22 October 2016.</p> <p>The new human resources unit will be responsible for leading the workforce strategies and initiatives recommended by the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission.</p>	
22	Establish a learning and professional development unit in the agency to lead training and professional development, for both professional and operational staff.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A learning and professional development unit was incorporated into the new Department for Child Protection, which was established on 1 November 2016.</p> <p>The learning and development unit will be responsible for professional development within the department, as well as implementing the government’s response to recommendation 23.</p>	

23	Require professional staff in the agency to complete a minimum number of hours of professional development each year as a condition of their employment.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through the government's response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, the government has increased the Department for Child Protection's training budget from January 2017. Increasing the amount of professional development hours undertaken by professional staff will be a priority for the training budget.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection has been tasked with providing options to the minister on how best to sustainably increase professional development hours undertaken by professional staff. The options analysis should consider whether the recommendation is best achieved through conditions of employment (as recommended by the Royal Commission) or by alternative means, such as sponsoring all professional staff to register with a professional organisation. The options analysis should also consider whether a professional development reimbursement program, modelled on that operating in SA Health, should be adopted.</p>		
24	Charge the executive of the agency, through the human resources unit, with a review of current practices and the development of evidence-based strategies relevant to: a. workforce records and data management b. workforce qualification profiles, including requiring any staff holding a case load to be degree qualified in a discipline relevant to child protection c. the recruitment, selection, induction and retention of staff, including managing all recruitment and selection centrally d. career, including management, pathways e. workload management f. performance planning, support and monitoring for enhanced staff performance g. professional development requirements, opportunities and resourcing, including adopting a professional development reimbursement program modelled on that operating in SA Health.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection was established on 1 November 2016, including the new human resources unit. This unit has been tasked with starting work on this recommendation.</p> <p>The South Australian Government agrees with the Royal Commission's finding that the professional base of the child protection workforce could be expanded by employing professionally qualified staff from disciplines other than social work, but case management should be reserved for staff who have relevant tertiary qualifications and appropriate experience. The review of workforce qualification profiles (part B of recommendation 24) should consider options for how the government can transition to such a staffing model over time.</p> <p>However, as described in the response to recommendation 23, the exact model to facilitate professional staff to undertake a set number of hours of professional development each year will be the subject of an options paper to the minister. As part G of recommendation 24 is being considered as part of this process, recommendation 24 is considered as accepted in principle.</p>		

25	Provide a psychological service to work with the executive to address the high levels of workplace stress in the agency.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The new human resources unit, established within the new Department for Child Protection (recommendation 5), has been tasked with implementing this recommendation. Consideration will be given to the most suitable suite of additional psychological wellbeing programs that can be provided to support agency executives to address workplace stress in the agency, on top of existing supports such as the Employee Assistance Program.</p>	
26	Appoint clinical managers to each metropolitan hub and regional office of the agency and review professional line-management structures accordingly.	Not accepted
		N/A
	<p>REASON</p> <p>The South Australian Government does not accept this recommendation.</p> <p>The government accepts the Royal Commission's comments at page 101 of <i>The life they deserve</i> report about ensuring that clinical decisions are made by appropriately qualified staff. However, instead of creating new clinical manager positions, the department will revisit the role and location of principal social workers to ensure that these workers are performing the functions described in the report at page 101.</p> <p>In addition, the reforms being progressed to ensure decision-making occurs at the closest possible level to the child (recommendation 9), and that a child's caseworker has primary responsibility for case management (recommendation 10), will drive better decision-making across the department.</p>	
27	Invest in clinical management, supervision and practice improvement, including the development of a supervision framework.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection's learning and development unit is responsible for implementing this recommendation. The supervision framework should expand on the work already underway within the department to develop a capability framework for staff, including a supervision course for new supervisors. The supervision framework should consider all parts of the department's business, including residential care.</p>	

28	Establish formal and regularly evaluated relationships between the agency and the tertiary education sector that are designed to: a. enhance student and academic knowledge and experience of child protection practice b. attract desirable graduates c. expand and focus child protection practice research d. ensure that the agency and its staff are kept abreast of contemporary professional research and literature.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Using a similar model to oversight mechanisms for teacher training, two taskforces will be established by the Department for Child Protection – the first to cover the areas of teaching and learning, and the second to cover applied research, research priorities and translating research into departmental practice. Membership of the taskforces will include higher education providers and professional bodies as appropriate. Both taskforces will be chaired by the chief executive, Department for Child Protection. These taskforces will enhance the dialogue between the department and the universities, and allow for conversations about the agency’s requirements about desirable graduate attributes, and how front-line staff can have access to and be familiar with evidence-based practice or the translation of research into action that changes practice. The establishment of an Early Intervention Research Directorate (recommendation 50) will also help strengthen relationships between the tertiary education and statutory child protection sectors.		

29	Establish a postdoctoral fellowship program in conjunction with the tertiary education sector to advance areas of research relevant to the agency.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. This recommendation will be achieved as part of the establishment of the Early Intervention Research Directorate (recommendation 50).		

30	Require the agency to take a lead role with other stakeholders to develop and implement a workforce strategy designed to improve staffing practices and performance across the broader child protection system.	Accepted
		Phase 3
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. As part of establishing the new Department for Child Protection, human resources and learning and development capabilities were increased. The first priorities of these units will be to develop a workforce strategy for the department (including an Aboriginal recruitment and retention strategy) and to ensure that departmental staff receive adequate training and support to promote best practice social work. Once these initial priorities are embedded, the new units will be tasked with implementing recommendation 30, as providing sector-wide practice leadership will be a key function of the new agency in a high-performing child protection system.		
31	Maintain the current mandatory reporting threshold set out in section 11 of the <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993</i> .	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Under the <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993</i> (SA), people in a range of professional or voluntary positions are required to notify the Department for Child Protection if they reasonably suspect that a child has been or is being abused or neglected, and that this suspicion is formed in the course of the person’s paid or voluntary work. In <i>The life they deserve</i> , the Royal Commission rejects the assumption that growing demand on our child protection system is a result of unnecessary notifications to the Department, encouraged by a low mandatory reporting threshold in comparison to other states. The South Australian Government will maintain the current legislative threshold for mandatory reporting. Instead, demand on the system will be reduced over the longer term through investment in early intervention and prevention programs		

32	Review the screening and response priority tools to ensure they give due weight to cumulative harm, chronic neglect, social isolation, underlying causes of dysfunction, the need to conduct timely forensic medical assessments, and the expertise and experience of professional notifiers.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is currently reviewing the Structured Decision Making (SDM) screening and response priority tools in partnership with the Children's Research Centre (CRC), the trademark owners of SDM. Changes were made to the tools as a result of interim findings of this review and recent changes in legislation. The tools have also been updated to incorporate the SAPOL domestic violence risk assessment tool and include additional assessment of neglect. The tools also identify injuries and forensic medical assessments for prioritisation.</p> <p>These changes are being reviewed to ensure they align with the intent of this recommendation and the broader <i>The life they deserve</i> report. This work is underway and the timeline for completion is contingent on the availability of CRC, as the copyright owners, to contribute to the review and ensure any changes to tools are appropriate.</p> <p>It is expected that the review and recommendations for any changes will be delivered in late 2017.</p>		
33	Review screened-out notifications periodically to ensure the threshold is being correctly applied.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The design of a new child protection system that includes a Child Safety Pathway will significantly impact the operational model of the call centre.</p> <p>Clinical staff in the call centre will be tasked with reviewing screened-out notifications periodically. This will include analysing the accuracy and consistency of decision making and providing advice on issues impacting the use and design of assessment tools.</p> <p>To ensure the new quality assurance and review process is effective, procedural documentation will be updated and an evaluation of the process completed 12 months after commencement.</p>		

34	Invest in the professional development of the agency's Call Centre practitioners, including, but not limited, to: a. the implementation of case reading b. regular clinical supervision c. the introduction of a tailored induction program d. ongoing training in the specific skills required of Call Centre practitioners.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The learning and development unit within the Department for Child Protection has been tasked with reviewing the training and professional development needs of staff across the department. Consideration of how to best invest in, design and deliver training, a revamped induction process and regular clinical supervision to call centre practitioners will be assessed in the context of all staff development needs identified in <i>The life they deserve</i> . Case reading, the process of senior clinicians reviewing case notes to inform supervision and clinical development with staff, will be included in new professional development processes. Consideration will also be given to placing the Yaitya Tiramangkotti team in the call centre, where they would assist with assessments of Aboriginal families at the point of notification intake. This team will help develop the skills and knowledge of staff to assess notifications regarding Aboriginal children and families more appropriately.		
35	Implement the automated call-back feature at the Call Centre for a trial period, followed by an assessment to determine whether its ongoing use is justified.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016. The automated call-back feature at the call centre will be activated for a 12-month trial period commencing in 2017. The impact of this change and the effectiveness of the call-back feature in reducing wait times will be assessed across the trial to determine whether to maintain or cease using the call-back feature.		

36	Staff the Call Centre at a level that would permit the achievement of the following service benchmarks: a. a maximum waiting time of 30 minutes for a telephone call to be answered b. a maximum of 24 hours to assess an eCARL notification c. a maximum delay of two hours for a call back.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle. The design of a new statutory child protection system that includes a Child Safety Pathway will significantly impact the operational model, staffing requirements and organisational structure of the call centre. The service benchmarks identified in this recommendation are supported by the South Australian Government. It is expected that the achievement of these benchmarks will be possible by the implementation of a number of other recommendations of <i>The life they deserve</i> and delivery of wider call centre reform. These benchmarks will be achieved progressively and incrementally as improvements to operations and service delivery systems are implemented.		
37	Ensure that the Call Centre is never left unattended. Crisis Care staffing levels should be immediately increased to no fewer than three staff at each shift.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016. The implementation of the Child Safety Pathway, and the effects of additional resources that will be deployed to support call centre and Pathway operations will be designed to ensure that this recommendation is implemented.		
38	Abandon the proposal to engage unqualified call agents to receive telephone notifications. Telephone calls from notifiers must only be taken by degree-level, tertiary qualified and experienced practitioners.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016. The pilot project to engage unqualified call agents to receive telephone notifications was abandoned on 12 August 2016. As part of the development of a new child protection system and the trialling of a new Child Safety Pathway, the government intends to employ qualified call agents with relevant tertiary degrees in social and human services.		

39	Update, as a matter of urgency, public information concerning the services offered by the Crisis Care service.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p>Public information on the new Department for Child Protection website has been updated. Out-of-date information has been removed from the Department for Education and Child Development website.</p> <p>Non-government agencies who maintain websites with out-dated information are being identified, contacted and provided with a new description of crisis care services.</p>	
40	Provide automated electronic feedback to all notifiers, confirming receipt of their notification (in the case of eCARL) and, post-assessment, what screening and response priority assessments were made in relation to their notifications.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The design of a new Child Protection system that includes a Child Safety Pathway will significantly affect the operational model of the call centre, including how eCarl and other online systems are used.</p> <p>All individuals who notify suspected abuse or neglect through eCarl currently receive an automated message informing them that their notification has been received.</p> <p>Whether it is appropriate to provide notifiers with any additional, post-assessment information will be considered as part of the Call Centre Reform project. Issues such as confidentiality, type of information provided, the purpose of providing information and the impacts on children will be considered.</p> <p>The use of notifier feedback in other jurisdictions will be considered in an assessment and review of whether implementation of a similar system is viable in South Australia.</p>	
41	Record notifications directly into an electronic log sheet that pre-populates the C3MS intake record.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A project has commenced to develop and implement an electronic log sheet that will populate C3MS intake records. The project includes developing a solution to replace the current paper-based system, and the creation of training material to support the electronic log sheet.</p>	

42	Review and improve the efficiency of recording practices of notifier only concerns (NOCs).	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the recording of NOCs in C3MS is time-consuming and improvements in efficiency are required.</p> <p>Development of the electronic log sheet proposed in recommendation 41 will include consideration of how NOCs are recorded. It is expected that this work will increase the efficiency of recording practices.</p> <p>Any changes to recording practices will ensure that the accuracy and quality of information recorded is maintained and where possible enhanced.</p> <p>The NOC recording interface will be considered in the review of C3MS that will be undertaken in response to recommendation 20.</p>		
43	Ensure the agency regains control of, and strictly oversees, mandatory notification training, including creating and updating an appropriate training package and a mandatory notifiers' guide, and regularly auditing training to ensure fidelity.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Mandatory notification training is pivotal to ensure that the child protection system is informed about the safety and wellbeing of children who may need assistance or protection.</p> <p>A specific package of work will be undertaken to develop a detailed and specific mandated notifier training model to be managed by the Department for Child Protection. This will include creating a new training package, updating notifier guides and developing an audit system that ensures training is delivered consistently and appropriately.</p> <p>This work will be undertaken with input and expertise provided by the learning and development unit in the new department.</p> <p>The South Australian Government is committed to ensuring all mandated notifiers are aware of when and how to notify safety concerns. The Department for Child Protection will ensure information and training is readily available regarding when and how to discharge this important duty.</p>		

44	Make mandatory notification training compulsory for: a. registered teachers b. general medical practitioners c. police officers d. other mandated notifiers who are employees of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, childcare or residential services wholly or partly for children, where the notifier either (a) is engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children or (b) holds a management position in the relevant organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Ensuring mandatory notifiers are aware of when it is appropriate to report concerns about the safety of children is a priority for the South Australian Government.</p> <p>Making mandatory notification training compulsory for notifiers such as registered teachers, general medical practitioners and police officers is supported.</p> <p>Making mandated notifier training mandatory for other mandated notifiers identified in part D is not supported at this time. This group includes a significantly broad range of organisations and the complexity of administering such a system would be very high.</p> <p>Instead, the Department for Child Protection, through the Call Centre Reform Project will identify the best way the South Australian Government can support the training of other mandated notifiers and develop a strategy for ensuring this group is aware of their responsibilities and how to discharge their duties as a mandated notifier.</p> <p>The mandated notifier guide that has been developed and is discussed in recommendation 46 will contribute to the further education and training of notifiers who use eCarL.</p>		
45	Restrict access to eCARL to notifiers who have completed mandated notifier training.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>eCARL is a valuable tool that assists notifiers to efficiently inform the Department for Child Protection about concerns it may hold about children. For the online portal to be most effective, it is agreed that restricting access to individuals who have completed notifier training is required. This would ensure that only notifiers who are better equipped to determine whether a notification warrants a report, make reports online. This should result in higher quality information being received, fewer screened-out notifications and more time available to Call Centre staff to make informed assessments.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will evaluate options for how best to implement a restricted access system.</p>		

46	Include an interactive mandatory notifier guide at the start of eCARL.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A paper-based mandated notifier guide has been developed by the Children’s Research Centre for use in South Australia. It is currently being tested with a range of mandated notifiers across government and non-government agencies. It is also subject to potential further changes based on the findings of <i>The life they deserve</i> report.</p> <p>When testing and updating of the tool is complete, the Information Technology Unit within the Department for Child Protection will be tasked with updating the tool for electronic use at the start of eCARL.</p>		
47	Amend Part 4, Division 1, of the <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993</i> to include a new provision permitting, but not requiring, a notifier to report concerns about an unborn child, regardless of the stage of pregnancy.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions have been drafted in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 that give effect to this recommendation.</p>		
48	Abandon the policy restricting the recording of report on unborn (ROU) children to 34 weeks’ gestation or later.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The policy restricting the recording of ROU children to 34 weeks’ gestation or later has been abandoned.</p> <p>The Interagency Code of Practice published in July 2016 now states that an unborn child concern should be recorded as an intake from 20 weeks gestation or later. The code of practice was developed by a cross-government and sector committee including key stakeholders from SA Health, SAPOL and the Department for Education and Child Development.</p> <p>A Practice Circular document was developed to provide an update on the ‘report on unborn policy’ and was circulated to Department for Child Protection staff on 20 October 2016.</p>		

49	Institute longer-term funding arrangements for prevention and early intervention services, subject to evaluation and performance criteria.	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The South Australian Government acknowledges the importance of investing responsibly in prevention and early intervention strategies to meeting the needs of children and families, and to delivering a better child protection system as a whole.</p> <p>It is also critically important that we invest in tried and tested programs that deliver real results.</p> <p>The Early Intervention Research Directorate will be charged with rigorously evaluating the early intervention and prevention programs for vulnerable children we currently fund, with a view to instituting longer-term funding arrangements for those programs that meet this standard. The Early Intervention Research Directorate will also evaluate new early intervention and prevention programs we fund.</p>		
50	<p>Establish an Early Intervention Research Directorate (EIRD) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> prepare a prevention and early intervention strategy that is updated at least every five years: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to identify service models that have proved effective or show promise in promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of children in South Australia to serve as the basis of decisions by South Australian Government agencies to fund prevention and early intervention services to form the basis of negotiations with the federal and local governments, with a view to coordinating funding priorities establish research partnerships and fund evaluations of innovative service models to determine their effectiveness and value for money focus on the prevention and early intervention investment priorities identified in this report. 	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The South Australian Government has partnered with the BetterStart Child Health and Development Research Group (Adelaide University), the Australian Centre for Child Protection and the Fraser Mustard Centre to establish the Early Intervention Research Directorate (EIRD) within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).</p> <p>EIRD has been tasked with leading the implementation of recommendations 29, 49, and 192.</p> <p>Initial areas of focus for the EIRD will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to undertake data analytics to better understand the experiences of children within the child protection system, and when, where and how it is most effective for support services to intervene to develop a best practice evaluation framework for early intervention and prevention programs to conduct a service audit, monitoring and planning to maximise the impacts of investments in service delivery for vulnerable children to include a specific focus on reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the child protection system through better enhanced understanding and suitable approaches to early intervention and prevention. 		

51	<p>Establish child and family assessment and referral networks in each region of greater Adelaide and regional South Australia that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a lead not-for-profit agency to manage, in partnership with the agency, a local entry point to services provided by partner agencies in the region, focusing on collaborative practice and coordinated, multi-service responses, when required b. an annual local assessment of needs (LAN) prepared by the lead not-for-profit agency after mapping the needs of vulnerable families and children in each region. The LAN would inform funding decisions for services c. child protection practitioners in each child and family assessment and referral network to support decision making in relation to child safety including when to refer higher risk families for a statutory response by the agency. 	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Funding has been provided through the government's response to establish three pilot Child and Family Assessment and Referral Networks (CFARNs) in the northern, southern and western suburbs, which will build on existing partnerships in those areas.</p> <p>The Royal Commission notes that <i>'in the early stages of service development and piloting, it may be that the Agency takes a greater role than would be anticipated in the long term...quality screening and assessment would be critical to ensuring that this initiative does not endanger children by responding to their needs in an inappropriate way.'</i></p> <p>Acknowledging this, the South Australian Government will lead and staff the CFARN pilots in the northern and southern suburbs, while the western suburbs pilot will be led by a non-government organisation so that both models can be trialled and evaluated.</p> <p>It is expected that the CFARN pilot will commence by July 2017. The pilot will then be reviewed at the end of 12 months, and consideration given to whether the initiative should be rolled out in other locations.</p>		

52	Employ qualified child wellbeing practitioners (CWPs) accessible to all staff in the department, but focusing on locations of greatest need, to consult with staff and to work directly with vulnerable families. CWPs should have on-site access to the agency's electronic database.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>As stated in <i>The life they deserve</i> “the South Australian Government announced it would employ up to 60 child wellbeing practitioners (CWPs) in schools to help staff identify vulnerable children and families and connect them to relevant services.”</p> <p>Thirty CWPs and CWP support staff were recruited by the Department for Education and Child Development in early 2016. An additional 30 were recruited in October 2016. These staff have been placed in schools based on locations and areas of greatest need. CWPs have on-site access to C3MS, the agency's electronic database.</p> <p>The Child Wellbeing Practitioner program is currently being evaluated to determine whether the model of service is effective in working with vulnerable families. If the pilot is successful, work will be undertaken to determine how best to design a model that ensures CWPs are accessible to all staff.</p>		
53	Equip relevant government agencies to support vulnerable families by appointing existing employees as child wellbeing assistants (CWA), in addition to their usual role, to provide staff guidance about options to support vulnerable families.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Providing more child protection-based support to staff in government agencies who don't have direct responsibility for statutory child protection is an important step in strengthening early intervention efforts across the state. This is particularly true in regards to better referrals for vulnerable families to services that they need.</p> <p>It also further promotes the important principle that child protection is everybody's responsibility.</p> <p>Therefore the South Australian Government has committed to ensuring child wellbeing assistants are appointed in all government agencies involved in the protection of children.</p> <p>Defining the role of CWAs will be one of the first priorities of the Coordinating Group for Care and Protection (CGCP), the re-invigorated inter-departmental committee. That committee has been tasked to oversee the design and implementation of a unified across government approach to child wellbeing assistants, their training and a model for collaboration which will govern their work.</p>		

54	Implement a simple, common assessment framework, such as ‘common approach’, for use by government and not-for-profit services who work with vulnerable children and families.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Solution Based Casework (SBC) is the current common assessment framework used for child protection in South Australia. SBC is currently being implemented in non-government organisations that work with vulnerable children and families. The intention of this roll-out of SBC beyond the Department for Child Protection is to create a common assessment framework approach to working with families.</p> <p>The timeframe for the continued roll out of SBC to the NGO sector will be dependent on the outcomes of a formal review of SBC fidelity recommended in recommendation 11.</p> <p>As SBC is implemented in the NGO sector, Department for Child Protection will assess which other government agencies and specific groups of staff would benefit from utilising a common assessment framework and casework approach. These groups will then be prioritised for training in SBC.</p> <p>Implementation of this recommendation will be closely aligned with work undertaken to deliver recommendations 53 and 55. Child wellbeing practitioners and child wellbeing assistants will be pivotal in ensuring a common approach is achieved and maintained.</p>		
55	Convene regular cross-agency training and networking sessions for all CWPs and CWAs in each local metropolitan and country region to increase their knowledge and support local inter-agency collaboration.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Training and networking across departments and external agencies is supported, and sessions that bring child wellbeing practitioners (CWP) and child wellbeing assistants (CWA) together to share information and enhance local inter-agency collaboration are supported.</p> <p>Implementation of recommendation 53 to equip relevant government agencies to support vulnerable families by appointing existing employees as CWAs is required before this recommendation can be fully implemented.</p> <p>The design and roll-out of training and network sessions for CWPs and CWAs will be considered in the development of a unified approach to CWAs.</p>		

56	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to permit mandated notifiers to discharge their obligations by: reporting to the agency's call centre (Child Abuse Report Line); or to designated child wellbeing practitioners, or by referral to a child and family assessment and referral network where the notifier believes a child's circumstances would be adequately attended to by a prevention or early intervention program.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle. The Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 has provisions for notifiers to discharge their obligations through means gazetted by the minister. The minister can therefore expand the ways that notifiers are able to discharge their obligations beyond the child safety pathway when alternative notifying pathways (such as child and family assessment and referral networks) are available, ready and appropriate.	

57	Review procedures for strategy discussions to ensure they are convened promptly upon the receipt of notifications requiring investigation (and without delay when children present with physical injury). Discussions should include all relevant government and non-government participants and be re-convened as necessary.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. In July 2016, the Interagency Code of Practice: Investigation of suspected child abuse or neglect (ICP) was updated by a committee including representation from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department for Education and Child Development• Families SA• Attorney-General's Department• Department for Communities and Social Inclusion• South Australia Police• Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions• SA Health• Commissioner for Victims' Rights• The Guardian for Children and Young People• Child Protection Services, Women's and Children's Hospital• Child Protection Services, Flinders Medical Centre. Section 3 of the ICP, 'Strategy discussion' provides detailed information about the purpose, appropriate configuration, composition and membership of strategy discussions. Section 4 also includes specific stipulations regarding physical injury and abuse. The updated guidelines and requirements in the ICP are clear and a significant improvement on previously available documented guidance.		

58	Provide the agency's practitioners with training, support and supervision to equip them to make realistic assessments of risks, particularly in areas of chronic maltreatment, cumulative harm, social isolation, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, family violence, and attachment and care needs of young children, to consider the views of children and to develop appropriate safety plans.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Training and professional development of staff is a key focus area of the new Department for Child Protection. The department will be tasked with undertaking a holistic review of all current training programs and training needs identified both by departmental staff and as a result of the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission. Changes that are made as a result of recommendation 59 and the reconciliation and redesign of assessment tools will need to occur before training development is complete. This is due to potential changes in tools having impacts on training requirements.		
59	Reconcile and integrate the agency's assessment tools and documentation (including Solution Based Casework™, the assessment framework and decision-making tools).	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The Department for Child Protection will undertake a reconciliation of the agency's assessment tools and documentation. This will require a number of tools to be rationalised and will facilitate more consistent assessment of children's safety and their needs. Findings from the review of Solution Based Casework that will be undertaken in response to recommendation 11 will inform the integration of assessment tools. The Children's Research Centre (CRC) will be consulted and their approval sought for any changes to or expanded use of structured decision-making tools.		
60	Amend section 20 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to delete section 20(2) and (3), and include a provision which empowers the agency to issue a written direction to parents, guardians or other persons requiring them to submit to a drug and alcohol assessment, with the results to be provided to Families SA.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.		

61	Ensure the agency responds to all screened-in notifications, either directly, or by appropriate referral, including responding promptly (including after hours) to notifications in which physical injuries are notified and the agency's assistance is required to facilitate a forensic medical assessment.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.		
The ability to respond to all screened-in notifications is contingent on the successful implementation of a program of work that will be informed by current reforms, Royal Commission recommendations and a fresh start for child protection in South Australia.		
The new intake model and the stronger referral pathways created by the establishment of child and family assessment and referral networks, will significantly impact how the Department for Child Protection responds to screened-in notifications, including in which physical injuries are notified.		
The new child protection system will include colocation of multi-disciplinary staff, improved exchange of information between agencies and better access to services such as primary health assessments.		
The achievement of targets outlined in recommendations 61 and 62 would require significant increases in resources to achieve without the implementation of a number of other <i>The life they deserve</i> recommendations, the design and operationalisation of a new child protection system and delivery of a number of associated reform projects in South Australia.		
In undertaking this program of work, additional opportunities to appropriately refer screened-in notifications and prioritise prompt responses to notifications involving physical abuse may be identified.		

62	Phase out the closure of intakes and files due to a lack of resources. This should occur over a period of no more than five years from the date of this report. In the interim, practitioners should be provided with clear guidelines as to the circumstances in which such closures are appropriate. There should be quarterly reports to the public on the rate of closures that are due to a lack of resources.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.		
The design of a new child protection system will significantly impact how the Department for Child Protection responds to screened-in notifications and determines the appropriate responses to intakes.		
As discussed in recommendation 61, the implementation of a new system that includes a child safety pathway and child and family assessment and referral networks will likely result in many children and families who did not receive a response, or services now being assessed and supported.		
The new system aims to increase efficiency, broaden referral pathways, provide better and timelier outcomes, and avoid the double-handling of cases. This would result in better allocation of work to support the phasing out of closure of intakes due to a lack of resources.		
The achievement of targets outlined in recommendation 61 and 62 would require significant increases in resources to achieve without the implementation of a number of other <i>The life they deserve</i> recommendations, the design and operationalisation of a new child protection system and delivery of a number of associated reform projects in South Australia.		
Case allocation is currently demand driven. A whole-of-government and community supported child protection system is required to support reform and ensure case allocation is based on child and family needs.		
In addition, the Department for Child Protection will develop clear guidelines for case closure that include criteria for closure and a process outlining appropriate action when a case is closed.		
63	Amend section 19(1) of the Children's Protection Act 1993 by deleting section 19(1)(b) thereof to provide that: a. if the chief executive suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk, the chief executive must cause an assessment of, or investigation into, the circumstances of the child to be carried out or must effect an alternative response which more appropriately addresses the potential or actual risk to the child.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.		

64	Ensure that the agency focuses on case management of protective intervention cases and that not-for-profit agencies provide direct service delivery to families. All protective intervention programs should be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that all such programs have an established evidence base.	Accepted
		Phase 2
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The chief executive of the Department for Child Protection has been tasked with implementing and regularly reporting on the progress towards recommendation 64.</p> <p>While the Early Intervention Research directorate will focus on rigorously evaluating prevention and early intervention programs, the same rigour must be applied to those programs delivered for children already in the child protection system – particularly protective intervention programs.</p> <p>Critical to achieving this recommendation will be government working in partnership with the non-government sector to develop capacity and to find new, innovative approaches to meet the complex, overlapping issues facing many vulnerable children and families.</p>	

65	Establish a Child Protection Service (CPS) unit at the Lyell McEwin Hospital.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Until now, South Australia has had two CPS units – one at Flinders Medical Centre and the other at the Women's and Children's Hospital.</p> <p>In response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, a CPS unit will be established at the Lyell McEwin Hospital. Implementation of this recommendation will be led by SA Health.</p> <p>The Lyell McEwin is South Australia's second largest birthing hospital, making it a logical choice for a northern hub for health-led child protection services.</p> <p>The new CPS unit will be established in a staged approach over 12 months, noting that achievement of this deadline is dependent on the recruitment of staff.</p>	

66	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to provide an independent model of expert assessment in similar terms to the Children's Court Clinic in New South Wales.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>While the South Australian government agrees that an independent court clinic could have benefits, there are strengths of the current model that need to be recognised.</p> <p>Psychological Services, Department for Child Protection, have an ongoing relationship with the child, and provide an ongoing service to that child – by conducting further assessments if required outside of the court process, and providing expert guidance and support to Department for Child Protection to assist with case direction.</p> <p>The skills that Department for Child Protection psychologists acquire as assessors provide them with a solid foundation on which to begin to build a therapeutic relationship with clients.</p> <p>Service excellence in this area depends on expertise and knowledge of the child protection system accumulated over time. This means experience in the field, working with clients, their case managers, carers and colleagues in the profession, as well as academic training and ongoing professional development.</p> <p>The intent of this recommendation and the advantages proposed by the Royal Commission in <i>The life they deserve</i> report at pp.200-201 are acknowledged and will continue to be explored by government. However, any independent court clinic would need to consider how children who require an assessment beyond the court process will have their needs met, and how cultural expertise and culturally appropriate practice will be incorporated into the model.</p>		
67	Amend the Children's Protection Act 1993 with respect to the procedures relating to family care meetings (FCMs) as follows: a. amend section 27(1) to provide that the agency should consider causing an FCM to be convened whenever it is of the opinion that a child is at risk but the risk appears capable of being addressed at an FCM b. repeal section 27(2) c. amends 36(6) to provide that an FCM decision would not be valid without the agreement of the relevant members of the family and agency d. require the agency to give effect to FCM decisions, unless they are impracticable or inconsistent with the principles of the legislation, in which case the FCM should be reconvened or proceedings commenced in court e. require FCM decisions to be reviewed after three months, but provide that any party to the decision may request an earlier and/or subsequent review, if required.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to parts A to D of this recommendation.</p> <p>However, part E is not supported at this time. There is potential that a review after three months will not be sufficient time to give effect to decisions at the family care meeting, and matters may still be before the court. Consideration will be given to this part of the recommendation after implementation of parts A to D.</p>		

68	<p>Review procedures and funding arrangements for the Youth Court Conferencing Unit:</p> <p>a. to enable the unit to recruit and train a panel of child advocates for family care meetings (FCMs) – advocates should hold a valid child-related employment screening clearance</p> <p>b. to consider whether in an appropriate case a child’s foster parent should be invited to an FCM.</p>	Accepted
	<p>Phase 1</p>	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation will have a significant impact and improvement on the voice of the child being taken adequately into account at family care meetings.</p> <p>There are currently 20 accredited volunteer child advocates (VCA) in the Youth Court Conferencing Unit, with a further four working as VCA trainees. The current VCAs have professional qualifications including teaching, health, social work, counselling and law. Under existing policy, all VCAs must hold a child-related employment screening clearance or be prepared to obtain one prior to commencing any advocacy work with the unit.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will be tasked with reviewing the procedures for the Youth Court Conferencing unit. The government will consider funding arrangements for the unit following the outcomes of this review.</p> <p>The South Australian Government acknowledges the critical role foster carers play in our child protection system, and strongly supports part B of this recommendation.</p>		
69	<p>Amend the <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993</i>:</p> <p>a. to require the child’s lawyer to:</p> <p>i. act in accordance with the child’s instructions to the extent the child is able and willing to give such instructions</p> <p>ii. supplement those instructions with his or her own view of the child’s best interests to the extent the child is not able and willing to give instructions (provided the lawyer’s views do not contradict any instructions the child is able and willing to give)</p> <p>iii. indicate the nature of the role to the child, in accordance with the child’s developmental capacity</p> <p>iv. indicate to the court on which basis submissions are made</p> <p>b. permit the court to appoint a child’s representative or, in emergencies, to dispense with the need for a representative. In the latter situation, the court should only make interim orders and then adjourn the proceedings to enable a duly instructed lawyer to represent the child.</p>	Accepted
	<p>Phase 1</p>	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.</p>		

70	<p>Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. repeal section 38(1)(a) which concerns the making of orders for supervision and undertakings and section 38(2)(a) b. include as an object in the Act the importance of timely decision making to promote stability and maintenance for a child c. at the time of the commencement of care and protection proceedings the agency should assess whether there is a realistic possibility of reunification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. within six months for a child under two years, or ii. within 12 months for a child over two years d. if there is a realistic possibility of reunification within the timeframe specified in recommendation 70(c), the agency should seek an order placing the child under the guardianship of the minister for a period of either six or 12 months (depending on the age of the child), and file a permanency plan setting out the proposals for reunification e. if at the commencement of care and protection proceedings, or at any time thereafter, there does not appear to be any realistic possibility of reunification within the timeframe specified in recommendation 70(c), the agency should immediately apply for an order placing the child under the guardianship of the minister until the age of 18 years and file a permanency plan setting out the proposals for the long-term placement of the child f. if at any time special circumstances arise (particularly with respect to an older child) which make it necessary to extend the timeframes set out in recommendation 70(c) hereof the court shall have the discretion to extend the timeframe for a period no longer than six months. In any such case the onus will be on the parties to demonstrate the need for such extension having regard to the child's best interests and the potential risk to the child's need for stability and permanence g. amend section 39(a) to delete the requirement to commence a hearing within 10 weeks, but provide that all proceedings be heard and determined expeditiously and that once the hearing commences, without special reasons, it should continue until the conclusion of evidence with the judgement delivered as soon as practicable thereafter. 	<p>Accepted in principle</p> <p>Phase 1</p>
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Parts B and G of this recommendation are supported and implemented in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016.</p> <p>The South Australian Government does not support part A at this time. It is the government's view that there remains a role for making orders for supervision and undertakings. Supervision orders are an important tool used with families and children where subsequent to a removal and investigation and assessment orders being granted, the children can return home. These orders should remain as an option in the legislation.</p> <p>Parts C, D, E and F of recommendation 70 are not supported by the South Australian Government, as they all rely on the adoption of strict reunification timelines recommended by the Royal Commission.</p> <p>The South Australian Government firmly supports the importance of timely decision making to promote stability for children, and accepts part B accordingly. However, legislating the tight timeframes recommended by the Royal Commission would not recognise the importance of maintaining the court's discretion to make orders in accordance with the child's best interests. The Department for Child Protection should use these timelines to inform their practice as they accord with the developmental needs of a child.</p> <p>The court should not be limited to extending the timeframe to only six months, but as the circumstances fit in children's best interests.</p>	

71	Encourage lawyers employed by the Legal Services Commission and the Crown Solicitor's Office to undertake child protection training and require lawyers engaged through the Legal Services Commission to represent children in state child protection proceedings to hold a valid child-related employment screening clearance.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
In response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, the Legal Services Commission of South Australia (LSC) and the Crown Solicitor's Office within the Attorney General's Department will renew their commitment to encourage lawyers working in state child protection proceedings to undertake child protection training.		
The LSC currently requires employees to have a valid police clearance and will ensure that lawyers engaged to represent children in state child protection proceedings hold a valid child-related employment screening clearances. The LSC offers in house child protection training to those lawyers.		
The Crown Solicitor's Office will continue to provide relevant employees with child protection training using professionals from within the Department for Child Protection and other agencies.		
72	Ensure that contact arrangements meet the changing needs of children with respect to such matters as venue, transport arrangements and supervision and that contact never occurs when the parent is or is suspected of being affected by drugs and/or alcohol.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
Ensuring that family contact arrangements meet the changing needs of the child is critical to a child-focused system and child-focused practice.		
The Department for Child Protection will continue to work closely with other government departments to find alternative venues and locations that might be appropriate for access. In particular, the department will work with the Department for Education and Child Development to increase capacity within children's centres, so that more access visits can be facilitated in centres that are close to other family services.		
The Department for Child Protection will review its policies and practice guidelines on access, to make sure staff are supported to facilitate access which meets the needs of the child. Policies and practice guidelines will also be updated to reflect that contact should not occur when a parent is or is suspected of being affected by drugs and/or alcohol, for the safety and wellbeing of children.		
Agency staff will be expected to use their professional judgement to ensure that access does not occur when parents are under the influence.		
Future enhancements to C3MS should consider improvements to how access is recorded, to facilitate improved reporting and evaluation of the department's approach to access.		

73	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to exclude contact arrangements from orders of the court and require all contact arrangements be referred to the agency for determination in accordance with the best interests of the child. The permanency plan filed at court should include a provision as to the resolution of contact disputes, including mediation procedures wherever possible.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.</p>	
74	Establish an independent standing expert Case Review Panel to review the issue of contact when mediation is unsuccessful and it is necessary to resolve any dispute as to contact arrangements.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.</p>	
75	Review and republish Rapid Response with updated guidance as to the extent of priority access for children in care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Coordinating Group for Care and Protection (CGCP) has been convened to oversee the review and republishing of an updated and rebranded Rapid Response. The CGCP is discussed further in the response to recommendation 76.</p> <p>The CGCP met in November 2016 and allocated the work to review and republish Rapid Response to the Department for Child Protection.</p> <p>As the inter-departmental committee responsible for overseeing Rapid Response, CGCP will ensure that consultation is undertaken across government and the community and priority access to services for children in care is provided.</p> <p>Rapid Response will be rebranded and renamed to emphasise a new and expanded approach to priority service provision to children in care that.</p>	

76	Reinstate the inter-departmental committee overseeing Rapid Response to review its operation, at least biannually.	Accepted
		Completed
	<h2>STATUS</h2> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The inter-departmental committee overseeing Rapid Response will be reinstated in the form of the Coordinating Group for Care and Protection (CGCP). Cabinet approved the establishment of the CGCP in January 2016 with the first meeting held in May 2016. The first meeting after the release of <i>The life they deserve</i> was held in November 2016.</p> <p>The CGCP is chaired by Cathy Taylor, Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection. Membership includes senior delegates from all agencies involved in Rapid Response. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department for Child Protection• Department for Education and Child Development• SA Health• SA Police• Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (Housing SA, Disability & Domiciliary Care Services)• Department for State Development (Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation)• Department of the Premier and Cabinet• Department of Treasury and Finance• Attorney-General’s Department• Department for Correctional Services <p>The CGCP will consider a number of Nyland recommendations from <i>The life they deserve</i> report as part of its process of review.</p>	

77	Ensure that every child or young person in care has an allocated caseworker who has face-to-face contact with them once a month at a minimum.	Accepted in principle
	Phase 2	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that regular face-to-face contact between a child and their case worker is important in ensuring that children are safe, cared for and have their developmental needs met.</p> <p>The review and implementation of a number of other recommendations will influence how this recommendation is achieved, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommendation 79: Allocation of secondary and primary case worker and the impacts on workload • recommendation 82: Concurrent case planning and impacts on workload • recommendation 78: Other person guardianship (OPG) reforms. <p>A number of children in care who are not receiving face-to-face contact at least once a month may not require intensive case management and are therefore possible candidates for OPG.</p> <p>The results of reviewing the merits of secondary and primary case worker, implementing concurrent case planning and the outcomes of OPG reform will influence and inform the delivery of this recommendation.</p>		
78	Assess all children who are currently receiving a differential response for eligibility for Other Person Guardianship.	Accepted in principle
	Phase 2	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Children receiving a differential response and receiving a less intensive level of service from their case worker may be more likely to be eligible for other person guardianship (OPG) than other children in care. It is therefore agreed that many children receiving a differential response should be assessed for OPG eligibility where they are in a stable long-term foster or kinship care placement and the carer(s) wish to obtain OPG.</p> <p>The Growing Other Person Guardianship project commenced in July 2015 with the aim of increasing the number of children who are transferred to the guardianship of their carer and streamline the application and granting process.</p> <p><i>The life they deserve</i> makes a number of recommendations regarding reform and improvements to the OPG referral and assessment process.</p> <p>Implementation of this project, along with delivery of recommendations in the chapter 'Adoption and other person guardianship' will impact on the delivery date and model used to prioritise OPG assessments.</p> <p>It is envisaged that a small number of other categories of carers and children may be identified that warrant prioritisation for OPG assessment and will need to be considered when prioritising assessments.</p>		

79	Assess whether allocation of a primary and secondary worker to deliver guardianship case management would improve the continuity of relationships with children.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection (DCP) will undertake an assessment of whether allocation of a primary and secondary worker to deliver guardianship case management will lead to beneficial outcomes for children. The DCP supports the concept of additional case workers and initial assessment indicates that continuity of relationships between children and the department would be improved.</p> <p>The assessment will include researching different jurisdictions and academic research where dual case workers have been used to identify different options for primary and secondary workers allocation and whether they are adaptable to the South Australian child protection system.</p>		
80	Review the policy guidance and all other documents used for annual reviews to ensure compliance with section 52 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> , including requiring greater sharing of the information discussed at annual reviews.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A review of annual review processes and policy guidance will be undertaken by the Department for Child Protection. As identified in <i>The life they deserve</i>, there is a requirement to expand the amount of information shared with wider members of the care team and those individuals identified in the current section 52 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i>.</p> <p>The review will ensure processes and policy guidance are consistent with the new Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 provisions for annual reviews.</p>		
81	Require that all annual reviews be chaired by a suitably qualified person who is independent of the case.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>It is current Department for Child Protection policy that a suitably qualified person, independent to case management, must attend all annual reviews for children in care. Annual reviews are currently chaired by an AHP3 or above social worker who is independent to the case, such as a principal social worker.</p> <p>To ensure this policy is adequately embedded in DCP policies and practice, the policy will be incorporated into all projects currently underway within the department, including the guardianship policy review.</p>		

82	Give concurrent planning greater emphasis in case planning, especially for children during their active attachment period.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The value of concurrent planning to support decisions regarding the best interests of children in care is acknowledged by the Department for Child Protection. <i>The life they deserve</i> documents a number of cases where concurrent planning supports positive placements, assists in reunification and informs decisions about children's placement and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will review the care planning policy to consider how best to promote case workers giving concurrent planning greater emphasis in case planning.</p>	
83	Review all placement breakdowns to determine and correct identified system deficits.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The need to review and understand why placement breakdowns occur is acknowledged. Due, in part to the nature of trauma suffered by children before they enter care, unfortunately a significant number of placements break down. It is the responsibility of the Department for Child Protection to identify the system deficits that allow placement breakdowns to happen and identify strategies to better support placements.</p> <p>Reviewing all placement breakdowns is not considered the most cost effective way to identify system deficits. Instead, an ongoing process will be developed that requires the auditing of a minimum number of placement breakdowns per year. This will include a documented process for identifying, reviewing and addressing both issues with the out-of-home care placement support system and the individual issues affecting on specific children.</p> <p>Implementation of a number of recommendations of <i>The life they deserve</i> will contribute to a reduction in placement breakdowns.</p>	

84	Provide therapeutic support to placements that are identified as being at risk or under stress.	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Many family-based and residential care placements require significant therapeutic support to ensure children are safe and well looked after and live in stable environments.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection (DCP) – Psychological Services team provides therapeutic support to many of these placements in the form of therapy and advice to case workers and carers on managing the behaviours and promoting the wellbeing of children. Services are also provided by University Child Wellbeing Clinics funded by the SA Government and private providers who are engaged to work with children, families and carers.</p> <p>There is an acknowledged need to expand this support for many placements across the child protection system.</p> <p>The delivery of a therapeutic framework for children, families and carers, and other related recommendations will require collaboration across agencies and across sectors. It will result in more initial and ongoing health assessments, strategic decision making across all placements, and more support being provided to children and their carers. It is expected that this will have a positive effect on preventing placement breakdowns.</p>		
85	Fund initial health assessment clinics at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Flinders Medical Centre (FMC) and Lyell McEwin Hospital to operate in accordance with the service model employed at FMC. This includes funding clinics at a level that enables a psychosocial component to be offered at every initial health assessment.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Currently, South Australia has two CPS units – one at Flinders Medical Centre and the other at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital.</p> <p>The establishment of a child protection service in the north will provide a unique opportunity to coordinate service provision across the South Australian health networks.</p> <p>SA Health has a critical role to play in the child protection system across South Australia, including the wider metropolitan area.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection and SA Health will work closely together to review current provision of health assessments to children in care in light of <i>The life they deserve</i>. This will include determining how best to ensure that all children in care undergo a timely initial health assessment that includes a psychosocial component.</p>		

86	Invest in the ongoing development of a therapeutic needs assessment panel led by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for children in care whose therapeutic needs are identified in their initial health assessment.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Significant work has been undertaken in the past to develop and deliver a therapeutic needs assessment panel that aligns closely with the panel identified in <i>The life they deserve</i>.</p> <p>A proposal for an interagency therapeutic pathways panel has been developed.</p> <p>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services will be tasked with further developing the panel based on an interagency panel piloted in 2015.</p>		
87	Develop an inter-agency panel modelled on the Exceptional Needs Unit’s management assessment panel to support case management of those children in care with complex needs who are not appropriately managed by existing services.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>A number of panels are currently in operation across South Australia that assess and support the case management of children in care with complex needs. These panels include the Resource Allocation and Review Panel managed by the Department for Child Protection, the Exceptional Needs Unit Panel and panels that sit under the Complex and Challenging Needs Committee.</p> <p>An opportunity exists to consolidate the operations of these panels and the proposed therapeutic pathways panel discussed in the response to recommendation 86.</p> <p>In designing the therapeutic pathways panel for initial health assessments, consideration will be given to drawing upon the expertise of that panel to also assess children in care with complex needs who are not appropriately managed by existing services. An options paper will be developed regarding children in care with complex needs that provides advice on how best to design this panel in context of the therapeutic pathways panel.</p>		
88	Develop a mobile outreach service modelled on Yarrow Place’s mobile youth team for children and young people who frequently abscond from placement, and who are at risk because of factors other than sexual exploitation.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Targeted supports for young people in care who are at risk of absconding or who engage in high risk behaviour are critical to improving outcomes for these young people.</p> <p>The government is currently reviewing the effectiveness and options for a mobile outreach service. This includes reviewing Yarrow Place and identifying the successful components of the model that could be duplicated in a different model. This review will inform consideration of how best to address the needs of young people who abscond and are at risk due to factors other than sexual exploitation.</p>		

89	Improve the profile of Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma (SMART) training for educational staff, requiring that to be part of professional development where appropriate.	Accepted
	Phase 1	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Improving the profile of teachers and educational staff engagement with Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma (SMART) training is an important step towards improving how the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) works with children and young people in care.</p> <p>The government has committed to a number of initiatives to improve the profile of SMART training and raise awareness of the impacts of trauma in general:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased promotion of SMART training through existing DECD communication channels including LInkEd and Xtra + and school counsellor distribution lists • update relevant DECD policies and procedures related to student wellbeing with information relating to SMART training where applicable • trial a whole-of-school approach to support students with severe trauma • increase training opportunities for a range of people and roles that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > wellbeing practitioners > support services > school-based counsellors > principals > teachers > ancillary school staff > staff working in the Anangu lands School • update and renegotiate training contract with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) to ensure needs of the trauma training needs of DECD staff are met <p>To implement these initiatives staff have been assigned to coordinate training, implement promotional strategies, identify target groups, undertake needs analysis and tailor training requirements.</p> <p>To further support an improved profile for SMART training, DECD has renegotiated and expanded the service agreement with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF), which delivers SMART training to DECD staff.</p>		

90	Review and promote the Department for Education and Child Development's policies regarding school suspension, exclusion and expulsion to ensure that they are used as strategies of last resort for children in care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>Exclusion and suspension rates for children under the guardianship of the minister are currently four to five times that of the general school population. Work is underway to identify the causes of this and build strategies to address these unacceptable rates.</p> <p>DECD has started a review into all policies that relate to school suspension, expulsion and exclusion. The review will focus not only on policy content but how policies are applied in schools across South Australia. Initial assessment of policies and consultation with staff indicates that changes to policies may not be required and instead improvements that increase adherence to the policy are required. This may include the development of additional alternative strategies for working with children in care.</p> <p>Changes or initiatives resulting from the review will be communicated to all principals, school staff and child protection staff to ensure suspension, expulsion and exclusion are only used as a last resort. In addition, information will be disseminated to principals about alternative strategies and support options available to assist in improving the wellbeing and meeting the educational needs of children in care.</p>		
91	Regularly conduct an audit of children in care who are on reduced hours of attendance at school and ensure they have plans to re-engage them in mainstream education.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>As identified in the response to recommendation 90, the government acknowledges the importance of school attendance and engagement in education in improving the wellbeing of children. It is well established that regular school attendance often results in better health, learning and life outcomes for children.</p> <p>The Engagement and Wellbeing directorate will undertake the review and update of the annual attendance audit process</p> <p>Children identified through an audit process will then be supported through their individual education plans and tailored strategies developed to re-engage them in mainstream education.</p>		
92	Require the Department for Education and Child Development to fund any in-school support needed by children in care.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>All in-school support required by children in care is now funded by the Department for Education and Child Development.</p>		

93	Recruit and train a panel of school services officers to support children with trauma-related behavioural challenges.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation is related to recommendation 89 to increase the profile of Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma (SMART) training in government schools.</p> <p>The Department for Education and Child Development is committed to ensuring all relevant school staff receive SMART training and that they receive any additional support and education required to work with children with behavioural challenges. This is especially important for school services officers (SSOs) who are engaged to work directly with children who have a history of trauma. Implementation of this recommendation will involve expanding the current SMART training program and other training programs related to trauma. DECD already employs a significant number of SSOs.</p> <p>The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF), contracted to provide SMART training to DECD staff, provides targeted training based on the age and development of children.</p> <p>In addition to the already established panel of school services officers, DECD will provide SMART training to the following ancillary staff in South Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• early childhood workers• Aboriginal community education officers• Aboriginal secondary education transition officers• bilingual school services officers.		
94	Amend the practice guidelines about written directives to comply with the provisions of the <i>Children’s Protection Act 1993</i> and provide training to child protection workers to ensure that they understand them.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Policy and Strategy unit within the Department of Child Protection (DCP) will be tasked with implementing this recommendation. DCP will update practice guidelines to comply with the provisions of the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016, in consultation with principal Aboriginal consultants, key agency staff and with Crown Law.</p> <p>Once the guidelines are updated (following passage of the Bill through Parliament), DCP will communicate this to all staff and offer training as appropriate.</p>		

95	Amend section 51 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to include a requirement that in all decisions affecting the child that are made in accordance with an order for guardianship, the child must be included in the decision making to the extent that they are capable and willing, and that the views of the child are given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The government supports the intent of the recommendation and in giving children not just a voice, but direct involvement in the decisions that affect their lives. Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.	

96	Require the agency to report quarterly to the minister and to the Guardian for Children and Young People, and make public a report as to the following matters: a. compliance with the <i>Standards of Alternative Care</i> in South Australia 2.1, 2.2 and 2.6 b. the proportion of children entering care whose health needs are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the relevant health standards c. the number and proportion of children and young people who have been reviewed in accordance with section 52 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> at the time the review falls due.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle. Data can currently be extracted from C3MS regarding compliance with the Standards of Alternative Care in South Australia 2.1, 2.2 and 2.6. Further enhancements are required to extract accurate data regarding health assessments and annual review information. These enhancements will be designed and implemented as part of general enhancements to C3MS.. Reports will be provided to the Guardian for Children and Young People annually.	

97	Amend the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to include relative carers within the regulatory provisions of Part 4, Subdivision 3 and section 80. The definition of relative carers should include the categories of relatives who are currently excluded from the definition of foster parent in section 4 (step-parent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, grandfather or grandmother), who care for children in the custody of, or under the guardianship of, the minister.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
Recommendation 97 will be implemented by repealing the relevant provisions in the <i>Families and Community Services Act 1972</i> (SA) ('the FACS Act') and including in the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016</i> (SA) ('the Safety Bill') provisions which regulate 'approved carers'.		
The Safety Bill states that a person must not provide out of home care unless the person is an approved carer. The Safety Bill provides that the Chief Executive may establish such categories of approved carer as he or she considers appropriate. It is contemplated that the categories of approved carers will include carers currently referred to by the Department for Child Protection as foster carers, kinship carers, and specific child only carers; and that the approved carer provisions will apply to the types of relative which are currently excluded from the definition of 'foster parent' in the FACS Act.		
98	Amend the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to provide approved carers with a right to information for the purposes of caring for children in the same terms as in sections 143–145 of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> (NSW).	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
The <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> currently contains provisions regulating foster care and foster care agencies, but provisions on these matters, including provisions implementing recommendation 98, will now be set out in the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016</i> (SA).		
Provisions in the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016</i> give effect to this recommendation.		
99	Amend the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to provide for approved carers to be involved in decision making concerning a child in their care, in the same terms as in section 146 of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> (NSW).	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
The <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> currently contains provisions regulating foster care and foster care agencies, but provisions on these matters, including provisions implementing recommendation 99, will now be set out in the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016</i> (SA).		
Provisions in the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016</i> give effect to this recommendation.		

100	Amend the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to provide a specific right to approved carers to contribute to a child's annual review pursuant to section 52 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> .	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.		
101	Amend section 80 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to repeal the current requirement that foster parents care for a child for three years or more before delegations of powers can be made, and instead prescribe a minimum period of 12 months.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> currently contains provisions regulating foster care and foster care agencies, but provisions on these matters, including provisions to implement recommendation 101, will now be set out in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016. The Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 provides that the Minister may delegate powers to approved carers at any time rather than after a minimum period of 12 months (or after a minimum period of three years, as is currently the case).		
102	Outsource assessment and support of kinship carers to appropriately qualified non-government organisations in accordance with the service models which currently apply to foster care.	Not accepted
		N/A
REASON The South Australian Government does not accept this recommendation. During the development of the response to <i>The life they deserve</i> report, the government received significant feedback about this recommendation. The majority of this feedback indicated that kinship carers and the wider community do not support the outsourcing of kinship carer assessment and support. The Department for Child Protection will continue to work with kinship carers to consider options for the involvement of non-government organisations in kinship carer support services.		

103	Develop or purchase a comprehensive kinship assessment tool for assessing the safety and appropriateness of kinship placements.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is currently reviewing kinship care assessment processes and tools.</p> <p>The findings of this review will be used to identify an appropriate tool for use in South Australia and inform the decision to develop or purchase a comprehensive kinship care assessment tool.</p>		
104	Invest resources in the Department's Carer Assessment and Registration Unit to expand services to include consideration of applications for registration by kinship carers. These registrations would be in accordance with an appropriate assessment tool, and would authorise the carer to provide care to a specific child or children only.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Implementation of this recommendation is subject to the outcomes of the Department for Child Protection's review, discussed in the response to recommendation 103.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection's Carer Registration Unit currently makes the approval or non-approval decision for full kinship care assessments. The initial registration approval decision is made by the Placement Services Unit, another team in the Department for Child Protection.</p> <p>The role of both of these teams in the assessment and approval process will be considered in the review.</p>		
105	Establish a Families SA Carer Assessment and Registration Unit service benchmark for assessment and registration decisions of 14 days where the assessment is complete and further information is not required from the assessing agency.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The establishment of service benchmarks will occur following the establishment of a project team to address the existing backlog in assessments of kinship carers (recommendation 109).</p> <p>In addition, review of kinship care assessment processes and tools discussed at recommendation 103 will identify a suite of improvements, process changes and new tools. Once implemented, these improvements will contribute to the achievement of the benchmark for assessment and registration decisions of 14 days after receipt where no further information is required.</p>		

106	Develop a process for carers seeking approval (foster parents and kinship carers) to provide preliminary information about themselves and other adults who frequent their home to enable comprehensive C3MS checks to be done before a full Step by Step or other appropriate assessment is completed.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will undertake a comprehensive review of the assessment and training of foster carers. Following this review, recommendation 106 will be considered in light of its findings.</p> <p>Currently, checks on applicants, their family and other adults who frequent their homes are completed at the point of registration approval by the Carer Assessment and Registration Unit (CARU) through C3MS.</p> <p>The review will consider inclusion of a C3MS check of applicants at the commencement of assessments. In this case, if any important contextual information is discovered that is important to the assessment process, this would be provided to assessors to consider in context of wider assessment.</p>		
107	Include in the service agreement with all registered agencies the requirement that Families SA Carer Assessment and Registration Unit be notified of any person who begins an assessment process for carer registration (by ‘step by step’ or another appropriate process) who is screened out, or, for whatever reason, subsequently withdraws from the assessment.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will comprehensively review the assessment and training of foster carers.</p> <p>In addition, a workshop will be held with non-government organisations that undertake carer assessments in 2017 to discuss the requirements for delivering recommendation 107.</p> <p>Following this, procedures will be documented and provided to contracted agencies to ensure that the Department for Child Protection is notified of any person who is screened out or withdraws from carer assessment processes.</p>		

108	Develop an approved panel of practitioners authorised to provide priority assessments of specific child only carers on behalf of registered agencies.	Accepted in principle
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts the intent of this recommendation, and accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>On 1 July 2016, the then Office for Child Protection established a ‘specific child only’ assessment and carer support service.</p> <p>This service, which is provided by Anglicare SA began receiving referrals in October 2016, and is provided on a 24 hour, 7 day per week basis for all children.</p> <p>The decision not to use a panel of providers and to use a single agency instead means that carers assessed by Anglicare SA will receive ongoing support from that agency and capitalise on the existing relationships built between carer, assessor and support workers.</p>		
109	Create a project team to address the backlog in assessments of kinship carers and comprehensively review carers whose assessment is limited to an iREG assessment where the child has been living in the placement for more than three months.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Through the government’s response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, a backlog team will be established in the Department for Child Protection to address the existing backlog in kinship carer assessments. The backlog team will exist for up to 2.5 years.</p>		
110	Cease reliance on medical self-assessment forms and response priority assessments for kinship carers.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The review of kinship care assessment processes and tools discussed at recommendation 103 will consider how the Department for Child Protection obtains medical information about kinship carers, including a review of how to obtain information directly from a general practitioner. The Department will work together with SA Health as appropriate to identify and implement potential solutions.</p> <p>The status and ongoing use of response priority assessments will also be considered as part of the review.</p>		

111	Enter an administrative arrangement with the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion to provide priority screening clearances for carers where a child has been placed pursuant to an iREG process.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is working on a memorandum of administrative agreement (MOAA) with the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion to provide priority screening clearances for carers where a child has been placed pursuant to an iREG process.</p>	
112	Review initial orientation training for carers seeking approval to include training on recognising and managing trauma related behaviours, together with information as to availability of, and access to, therapeutic assistance if required.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will comprehensively review the assessment and training of foster carers.</p> <p>Training provision to foster carers is currently managed by non-government organisations providing support to carers. It is funded by the Department for Child Protection. The majority of carer support agencies use therapeutic crisis intervention training for foster carers and the Australian Childhood Foundation.</p> <p>DCP will review of orientation training for carers. This will include the availability of information about how to access ongoing therapeutic assistance if required.</p> <p>Non-government organisations, carers and peak bodies will be consulted regarding options that are identified and any changes that may be made to training requirements and provision.</p>	
113	Include agency staff, children in care and existing foster parents and kinship carers in the delivery of preliminary information and training for new and prospective approved carers.	Accepted
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will comprehensively review the assessment and training of foster carers.</p> <p>This work will include assessment of the inclusion of agency staff, children and existing carers in training.</p> <p>Some training programs provided by carer support agencies currently include agency staff, children in care and existing foster parents and kinship carers.</p> <p>Non-government organisations, carers and peak bodies will be consulted regarding options and any changes that may be made to training requirements and provision.</p>	

114	Develop a practice guide identifying the circumstances in which delegations pursuant to the amended section 80 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> should be made.	Accepted
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Section 80 of the <i>Family and Community Service Act 1972</i> has been repealed and redrafted into the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016. Once the legislation has been passed, the Department for Child Protection will develop a practice guide reflecting the provisions of that Act. This will be accompanied by advice to staff and additional training.</p> <p>Once legislation is passed, internal practice guides will be adapted into publically available guides for carers. These will be used to promote the redrafted legislation as per the requirements of recommendation 156.</p>	
115	Develop a written document which sets out the role and duties of the supporter of carers (SOC), including their role if care concerns arise, and to whom various duties are owed. This document should be freely available to home-based carers.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The information currently publicly available about the role of supporters of carers and carer support agencies is limited and only located in larger documents such as the Standards of Alternative Care in South Australia. Specifically, section 3.2 of the standards is the most readily accessible information regarding the minimum expectations of carer support.</p> <p>To address this, a single written document will be developed that outlines the explicit roles and duties of supporters of carers. It will refer to both kinship and foster carers and be specifically targeted to carers as the primary audience. This document will also include what carers can do when concerns arise.</p>	
116	Fund Connecting Foster Carers, or an appropriate alternative agency, to deliver an advocacy service with paid staff to support carers to access and exercise their rights.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>At present, Connecting Foster Carers SA (CFC) provides an advocacy service for foster carers and is funded by the Department for Child Protection. CFC provides a mechanism for DCP to consult with and to hear the voice of carers in South Australia. They also provide a way for DCP and carers to work together in the interests of enhancing foster care in South Australia.</p> <p>Due to increases in the number of carers accessing advocacy services through CFC, additional funding was provided in March 2016.</p> <p>However, before implementing recommendation 116, current arrangements for advocacy services for foster carers will be reviewed, including whether CFC is the agency best placed to provide this service. This process will include consultation and engagement with foster carers.</p>	

117	Fund the advocacy service to develop education material which clearly describes foster parents rights to contribute to decision making, and their rights of review regarding decisions which affect them.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. As the main representative body providing an advocacy service to carers, Connecting Foster Carers SA currently provides some educational material and advice to carers. As identified in <i>The life they deserve</i> , there is a need to increase the amount of information provided about foster parent's rights to contribute to decision making and decisions that affect them. Education material developed will include information regarding changes and extensions of foster carers rights regarding decision making that will result from the implementation of a number of other recommendations and legislative changes. Consideration of how a carer advocacy service model would be designed and implemented (recommendation 116) will look at the development of educational material and whether it is most appropriately delivered by a funded advocacy service.		
118	Create an expert panel within the agency to consider the removal of children from long-term home-based placements.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle. It is imperative that expertise is made available to inform decision making about the removal of children from long term placements. As identified in the case studies of Part 2 of <i>The life they deserve</i> , the impacts of removals from long-term placement on children need to be considered in full and decisions made in their best interests. The Department for Child Protection will work to deliver an enhanced model of decision making for removals of children from long-term placements. This work will further consider the engagement of an expert panel to consider or oversee those decisions. If a panel model is deemed the best way to improve decision making in this area of a child's life, training and guidance documentation will be developed including a terms of reference, and definitions of membership requirements.		
119	Review reimbursement rates to bring general foster rates with loadings for children with complex needs closer to rates payable to therapeutic carers.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Two types of family based care support are currently funded by the Department for Child Protection: general family based care (designed to support children with low to moderate needs) and specialist family based care (to support children with the most complex needs). The Department for Child Protection will review reimbursement rates for foster carers. This work will be undertaken in context of work already underway on a project to identify ways foster carers can be supported better, led by KPMG.		

120	Develop a specific package of training for general foster parents which can lead to payment of additional skills based loadings.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Delivery of this recommendation will be considered with recommendation 119.</p> <p>Currently, most foster carers are reimbursed based on the complexity of the needs of the child they care for. Where a foster care is caring for a child with complex needs, and reimbursed accordingly, they are supported by an agency specialising in providing support to complex placements.</p> <p>The government is committed to ensuring the needs of children remain the primary driver of decision making and system development. This commitment will influence any decision to adopt a system where foster care skills and training influence decision making as opposed to the specific circumstances and needs of children.</p> <p>Where foster carers are equipped and ready to transition to therapeutic agencies, and it is in the best interests of the children they care for, this will be supported. This is discussed further in the response to recommendation 121.</p>	
121	Support carers who are registered to general agencies to transfer to therapeutic agencies where the needs of children in their care require it.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Supporting carers to transition from general to therapeutic agencies is now an established practice in the Department for Child Protection.</p> <p>The carer registration procedure developed in March 2016 includes a section, 'approved carers seeking to change supervising service provider'. It outlines the considerations and steps involved in transferring carers with a child in their care, from general foster care to therapeutic foster care.</p> <p>To ensure foster carers, the children in their care and case workers are informed about this new process a suite of frequently asked questions documentation has been developed. This was finalised and distributed to staff, foster carers and foster care agencies in 2016.</p>	
122	Conduct a review of contractual conditions and payments to registered agencies to promote greater consistency of payments to agencies which support foster parents.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is currently reviewing models for payments to foster care agencies.</p> <p>In addition, the independent Foster Care Support project led by KPMG is reviewing how support agencies and the Department for Child Protection can work better together to support foster carers.</p>	

123	Update the <i>Alternative Care Support Payments: Manual of Practice</i> and make it available to all approved foster parents and kinship or relative carers.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Documentation regarding carer support payments was updated in December 2015. The <i>Alternative Care Support Payments: Manual of Practice</i> has been replaced with an internal staff procedure pack, and a carer handbook is available publicly.</p> <p>The carer handbook is available on the South Australian Government website and helps foster, kinship and other family based carers to better understand the financial support provided by the Department for Child Protection when caring for a child under the guardianship of the minister.</p>	
124	Monitor developments in professional models of foster care in other states with a view to adopting or adapting a proven model.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>South Australia has previously expressed support for a national approach to develop a model of professional care which would be underpinned by changes to, or exemptions from, existing national taxation and industrial relations legislation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will continue to monitor developments in professional models of foster care in other states and consult closely with other jurisdictions to assess viability of a pilot in South Australia.</p>	
125	Engage and support the Child and Family Welfare Association to develop more coordinated provision of training to carers.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will comprehensively review the assessment and training of foster carers.</p> <p>Currently, individual foster care support agencies are responsible for providing a range of training to carers. This is required to meet foster care support agency licensing conditions in the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i>.</p> <p>There is no single body or agency responsible for the coordination of training across agencies. The Department for Child Protection will engage and consult with Child and Family Welfare Association to determine their capacity to provide this service.</p> <p>This consultation will include discussions about recommendation 126, regarding engaging and supporting CAFWA to coordinate respite services.</p>	

126	Engage and support Child and Family Welfare Association to improve the coordination of respite provision to carers.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>Currently, Department for Child Protection funds a number of agencies to deliver family-based care and respite services that are negotiated on an individual basis depending on the needs of children and carers. In most cases respite is provided by the same service provider providing the long-term placement.</p> <p>CAFWA will be consulted to identify any changes needed to the way respite care is coordinated and provided to carers. This will include designing a collaborative approach to transitioning from an individual agency based respite coordination model to a single advocacy agency undertaking coordination across the sector.</p>	
127	Develop a centralised system for receiving and resolving complaints from carers, including informal mediation or escalation to executive staff where appropriate. Timely written responses should be made to complaints.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The need to improve, better document and communicate avenues for complaints was a theme throughout <i>The life they deserve</i>.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will review current internal complaints processes and design a centralised system for receiving and resolving complaints, including the escalation of matters to executive staff where appropriate.</p> <p>The documentation of both internal and external complaints processes (recommendation 256) will be closely coordinated.</p>	
128	Phase out the use of commercial carers in any rotational care arrangements except in genuine short-term emergencies.	Accepted
		Phase 3
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The raft of reforms implemented as part of the government's response to <i>The life they deserve</i> report are all working together with the aim of delivering a refreshed child protection system where commercial carers are only used in genuine short-term emergencies. This is a priority for the South Australian Government.</p> <p>In particular, this includes strategies to increase and better support foster and kinship care placements. A significant additional number of foster and specialist foster care placements have been funded by the Department for Child Protection and will commence over the next 12 to 24 months.</p> <p>As this recommendation is implemented, it is envisaged that capacity within the system will be created to allow additional staff to be deployed, decreasing the number of single-handed shifts to the point that they can be abandoned as recommended in recommendation 132.</p>	

129	Review service agreements with commercial agencies who supply emergency care staff to:	Accepted
	<p>a. require the commercial agency to develop job and person specification and selection criteria which must be approved by Families SA</p> <p>b. prohibit workers from undertaking shifts through more than one commercial care agency at a time when engaged by Families SA to look after children in care. This includes a prohibition on undertaking shifts for a commercial care agency at the same time as undertaking shifts for Families SA</p> <p>c. require commercial care workers to be registered and approved by Families SA before their employment begins</p> <p>d. require commercial agencies to report any information that reflects on the suitability of a care worker, to initiate tracking via the system outlined at recommendation 142.</p>	Phase 2
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Contracts Unit within the Department for Child Protection will be tasked with a review of service agreements with commercial agencies. The terms of reference of the review will include the requirements outlined in parts A to D of this recommendation.</p> <p>Work will also be required to develop procedures, systems and mechanisms to monitor the employment of commercial carers across agencies, register and approve commercial carers and develop the tracking system identified in recommendation 142. This will be considered on completion of the review of service agreements with commercial agencies.</p> <p>It is expected that the additional information and oversight that delivery of this recommendation creates will contribute to the safeguarding of children in commercial care in combination with other recommendations including 132.</p>		
130	Provide Families SA staff who work with commercial carers with access to relevant portions of service agreements to clarify work expectations and specific conditions of engagement.	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The government acknowledges the importance of ensuring departmental carers are well informed about the work expectations and specific conditions of engagement in place regarding commercial carers.</p> <p>A detailed FAQ document has been developed for Department of Child Protection staff about the role of commercial carers, which was distributed to staff in November 2016. This was subject to consultation throughout the department.</p> <p>This document includes relevant information from service agreements and presents it in an easy to read and accessible form.</p> <p>It is expected that the additional clarity of roles, oversight and involvement of residential care staff will contribute to the safeguarding of children in commercial care in combination with other recommendations.</p>		

131	Provide the Residential Care Directorate with sole responsibility for engaging, supervising and supporting emergency care placements.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A project is currently underway to transition the governance of Housing SA owned properties where commercial carers are operating to the Residential Care directorate. This includes 31 houses in which commercial carers will be supervised and supported by residential care staff after this transition.</p> <p>Once these houses and placements have been allocated to the Residential Care Directorate to govern and support, the next stage of transition will be determined.</p> <p>Beyond that project, how this recommendation is delivered will be impacted by the future implementation of other recommendations, increases in family based care placements and a possible reduction in the number of commercial care placements. An assessment will be made at that time as to how best progress implementation of this recommendation.</p> <p>To significantly increase the number of commercial care placements that are governed, supported and audited in the interim by the Residential Care Directorate, the Intensive Placement Support Team has been substantially expanded.</p> <p>This team currently undertakes audits of and provides care support and advice to commercial care placements.</p>		

132	Forthwith abandon single-handed shifts by commercial carers engaged through commercial agencies.	Accepted
		Phase 3
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p>Initial analysis by multiple government agencies informed by discussions with key partners, indicates that the number of youth workers and carers required to staff all commercial care placements with more than one staff member are not currently available. This includes consideration of sourcing care staff from the Department for Child Protection, non-government and for profit workforces and the wider community employment pool.</p> <p>Therefore alternative strategies to simply employing more staff are needed to abandon single-handed shifts. To completely abandon single-handed shifts by commercial carers, the number of alternative placement options must be increased. This includes foster, kinship and residential care. Implementation of a number of the recommendations of <i>The life they deserve</i>, along with a number of initiatives currently being delivered by the Department for Child Protection will help achieve this.</p> <p>Children in commercial care will be placed in more suitable, therapeutic placements matched to their needs as this expansion of placements occurs.</p> <p>At the same time, the program to continue and increase the recruitment of residential care youth workers will be maintained. Not only will these staff be available to provide care in residential care placements, but they will also be available to work with commercial carers on single handed shifts to further ensure the safety of children.</p> <p>During the transition period in which single-handed shifts will still occur, the department will implement the following safeguarding initiatives:</p> <p>Safeguarding initiatives in commercial care</p> <p>Safeguarding training, practices, policies and tools implemented in residential care placements to safeguard children from abuse to be implemented in commercial care placements.</p> <p>Expanded Intensive Placement Support Services (IPS) Team (recommendation 131)</p> <p>This team currently undertakes audits of and provides care support and advice to commercial care placements. This team will be substantially increased to provide support and safeguarding audits to commercial care placements.</p> <p>Care concern management reform project</p> <p>In response to <i>The life they deserve</i>, the Department for Child Protection will initiate a project to reform how care concerns are managed. This will contribute significantly to the safety of children in commercial care due to additional information being available regarding potential offenders and more effective and efficient responses to concerns about children.</p> <p>In addition to these initiatives, delivery in part or in full of recommendations 129, 130, 131, 143 and 147 will contribute to increasing the safety of children in commercial care and 128 and 150 will have significant influence in reducing reliance on commercial care.</p>		

133	Reform the manner in which the use of force against children in residential care facilities is recorded and tracked by: a. amending regulation 14 of the Family and Community Services Regulations to require any worker who participates in or witnesses an incident involving or leading to the use of force against a child to verify the accuracy of the written report of the incident or, in the alternative, where the accuracy of the written report is not verified, provide an independent written account with respect to the incident b. amending the pro forma of the report to clarify the requirements of regulation 14(3) c. requiring supervisors to reject any report that does not comply with regulation 14(3) in the absence of any adequate explanation for non-compliance. If a non-compliant report is accepted, the supervisor should specify the reason for acceptance in the absence of compliance d. regularly audit reports to ensure compliance with the regulations.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Recommendation 133(a) will be implemented by regulations under the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 ("Safety Bill"). The <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> currently contains provisions regulating licensed children's residential facilities, but these provisions will be repealed and provisions on licensed children's residential facilities have been included in the Safety Bill. In October 2015 the Residential Care Directorate implemented new procedures and templates regarding the reporting of incidents involving the use of force. The Residential Care Directorate will review its procedures and templates to ensure that they are consistent with this recommendation.		
134	Amend section 56 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> to extend the operation of the section to children in all facilities (including emergency care) established by the minister, and develop a specific and identifiable pathway to enable a child to make a complaint to the chief executive pursuant to that section.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Recommendation 134 will be implemented by repealing section 56 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> (and other provisions on licensed children's residential facilities) and including in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 a provision which can be applied both to children and young people living in licensed children's residential facilities, and to children and young people living in facilities established by the Minister (including emergency care).		

135	Require the chief executive to provide a quarterly report to the Guardian for Children and Young People (GCYP) and the minister with respect to the number of complaints received, and any recurring themes which emerge from those reports.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>A system to deliver reports regarding complaints of all types will be developed. The system will produce reports about complaints made by children in residential and commercial care and this will be delivered to the Guardian for Children and Young People annually.</p> <p>An automated database will be considered as part of the package of work to implement recommendations 127, 143 and 256. Once a centralised system for collating, managing and resolving complaints is developed, complaint reports will be produced.</p>		
136	Request the Guardian for Children and Young People to develop an education program for children in facilities run by the agency or non-government organisations (emergency and residential) to explain and promote their rights pursuant to regulation 14(3) of the <i>Family and Community Services Regulations 2009</i> and section 56 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> .	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016</p> <p>The government will continue to work with the guardian to progress this recommendation and ensure children are aware of and exercise their rights about complaints.</p>		
137	Legislate for the development of a community visitors' scheme for children in all residential and emergency care facilities.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Child and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 (SA) ("the Safety Bill") contains provisions that enable a community visitor's scheme to be established, to apply to children in all residential and emergency facilities.</p> <p>The Child Protection Systems Royal Commission report does not prescribe the type of community visitor's scheme that should be adopted: for example, the type of expertise that should be required of community visitors, and the basis upon which community visitors should be engaged.</p> <p>The government will continue to engage with key partners on the form a community visitor's scheme should take in South Australia.</p>		

138	Recruit child and youth support workers in accordance with the 2016 recruitment model, including a requirement that all applicants for those positions undergo individual psychological assessment.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The current child and youth support worker recruitment model is based on the model in operation at the start of 2016. To improve efficiency and the experience of applicants, minor changes have been made to the order in which phases of the recruitment process occur.</p> <p>As recommended, all child and youth support worker applicants who are engaged to work in the Department for Child Protection undergo an individual psychological assessment.</p> <p>The recruitment process will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that it recruits a workforce that keeps children safe and is psychologically equipped to work with children in care.</p>		
139	Require all new child and youth support workers to complete a minimum six-month probationary period, to be followed by a rigorous performance review before approval for further employment.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The human resources unit in the Department for Child Protection will develop a probationary process for child and youth support workers who commence work in the Residential Care Directorate in accordance with this recommendation.</p> <p>The requirements of this process will also be included in induction information for impacted staff.</p>		

140	Require all child and youth support workers to complete ongoing professional development and training, particularly in the following areas:	Accepted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the dynamics of abuse in institutional environments b. understanding children who are at risk from institutional environments c. the way in which children react and respond to abuse d. how to respond to children whose behaviour or statements may indicate the possibility of abuse e. the early years child development, and caring for infants and young children (for selected workers). 	Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A number of training opportunities already exist for child and youth support workers that provide information relating parts A to E of this recommendation. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Induction training – a course facilitated by the Department for Education and Child Development registered training organisation (RTO). It includes the Residential Care Practice Package, which consists of detailed guides on key issues about child development, the impacts and responding to abuse and neglect, working with sexualised behaviour and more 2. Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention – a 12-month course to support the day-to-day work of workers and delivered by the RTO 3. Leading Residential Care, Diploma in Leadership and Management – a residential care-specific training package version of a nationally recognised qualification and delivered by the RTO 4. Training and Education Assessor Skill Set – a course provided to senior operational staff in residential care for the purpose of certifying them to complete high quality workplace assessments of child and youth support workers undertaking the Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention. <p>Work will be undertaken by the learning and development unit of the Department for Child Protection to ensure parts A to E are adequately included in existing training, additional training is developed if required, and ensure it is accessible to all relevant staff in the Residential Care Directorate.</p> <p>Parts A to E will also be assessed for inclusion in the supervision and professional development system developed in response to recommendation 148.</p>		

141	Review and clarify policies that guide the behaviour of workers, particularly in relation to: a. physical contact with children (to provide clear and unambiguous guidance) b. recording observations in observation logs c. reporting lines for information about the wellbeing of children.	Accepted
	Phase 1	
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The Residential Care Directorate currently has a number of policies, procedures and guidance in place that require review to implement this recommendation. A working party will be convened to review these policies to ensure content is up-to-date and aligns with this recommendation and the findings and commentary in <i>The life they deserve</i> .		
142	Develop a clear process for workers in the Residential Care Directorate which: a. obliges workers to report any concerning behaviours from other workers, including those behaviours that do not necessarily meet the requirements for a mandatory report b. obliges workers to report concerning behaviours from children in the absence of action by case management staff c. clarifies the availability of reporting pathways external to workers' immediate line of supervision.	Accepted
	Phase 1	
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. A procedure and process will be developed regarding the reporting of concerns by Residential Care Directorate staff. Documentation will include information on identifying, recording and reporting concerns that are raised regarding the behaviour of workers and the behaviour of children and will involve multiple pathways to report concerns. This work will be closely aligned to the Care Concern Management reform project established in response to the findings of <i>The life they deserve</i> . The design of this process will be underpinned by the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector released in 2015 which details the obligations of staff to report concerns regarding other employees.		

143	<p>Create a specific unit and database to receive and track information about the conduct of staff from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. care concerns b. critical incident reports c. information from other staff d. complaints made by children. <p>This process should apply to staff employed by the directorate and those engaged through commercial agencies. Staff should be permitted to provide information directly to that unit.</p>	Accepted
	<p>Phase 1</p>	
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Information regarding care concerns, critical incident reports, information from staff and complaints made by children are recorded and stored on different systems. This information should be readily accessible to care concern investigators, panels making determinations and other staff who are reviewing the conduct of carers and staff. The creation and structure of a specific unit to manage this information will be considered as part of the Care Concern Management reform project.</p> <p>A single database or 'e-file' solution will be developed by the Department for Child Protection. A number of different databases and information system options will be evaluated to determine the most appropriate. The move to a dedicated database for such varied information, gathered from multiple sources will require a significant amount of work to reconcile existing databases and train all required staff in how to use the new information technology database.</p> <p>It is expected that the additional information regarding the conduct of staff that would be available as a result of this recommendation will facilitate more efficient decision making regarding the engagement and non-engagement of specific commercial carers who pose a risk to children. This will contribute to the safeguarding of children in commercial care.</p>		
144	<p>Review the conduct of the specific staff identified in Volume 2, Case Study 5: Shannon McCoolle and consider their ongoing suitability for employment in their role.</p>	Accepted
		Completed
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p>The Department for Education and Child Development has taken action to suspend the three employees specifically identified.</p>		

145	Develop a streamed model of residential care with the following elements: a. short-term assessment b. long-term care for children who are not suitable for home-based care c. care for children with high therapeutic needs d. built-in measures of outcomes that can be used to evaluate performance of the model on a regular basis.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. In 2014, the Department for Education and Child Development developed a Care Streams Recommendations paper that documented options for the development of a streamed model of residential care. The streams identified in that paper are similar to those defined in parts A to D of this recommendation. The streams will be reviewed in light of <i>The life they deserve</i> to ensure they reflect the definitions contained in the report. The implementation of a streamed model will be planned in the context of the development of a therapeutic framework for children in care a wider body of work to reform Residential Care operations, and service delivery in response to the findings of <i>The life they deserve</i> . The therapeutic model of residential care that will be developed in response to recommendation 146 will be applied across all care streams.		
146	Identify and adopt a model of therapeutic care which is sufficiently flexible to be applied across all categories of residential care, and which promotes a consistency of approach and standard of care for all children.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The Department for Child Protection will develop a whole-of-sector therapeutic framework that applies to all child protection service provision in South Australia. The framework will guide how all government and non-government agencies deliver services to children in care and at risk. The framework will apply to all parts of the child protection system including early intervention and prevention, investigation, caring for children in family-based care and non-family based care. Development of the <i>Child Protection Therapeutic Framework</i> will require the cooperation and input of all government and non-Government agencies who work in child protection. Once this is developed, a model of therapeutic care for all residential care services will be identified or designed. It will inform the development of streams of care developed in response to recommendation 145 and will apply to residential care delivered by Department for Child Protection, NGOs and commercial care.		

147	Replace operational services (OPS) 5 supervisors in residential care with allied health professional (AHP) or professional officer (PO) degree qualified staff, and recast the job and person specification to focus on the provision of staff with high level expert knowledge.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>A trained and experienced residential care workforce is pivotal in ensuring children are cared for in a way that keeps them safe, nurtures them and helps them to reach their full potential. This is especially important for leaders in the care workforce who provide guidance and supervision to other staff.</p> <p>Therefore, the Department for Child Protection has implemented the Leading Residential Care training program and the Training and Education Assessor Skill Set discussed in the response to recommendation 140. These training programs balance social work and tertiary level concepts with supervision skill development.</p> <p>Currently, if an applicant for an OPS5 supervisor position has a degree in a relevant field, this is considered positively in any decision regarding recruitment to that position.</p> <p>Consideration of how best to recruit and retain a qualified, capable residential care work force will be undertaken by the human resources unit established in response to recommendation 24.</p>		
148	Ensure that all youth workers in residential care have regular supervision as a means to promote their professional development and, where necessary, manage deficits in their performance.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>In 2015, a draft supervision procedure for residential care was developed. This document will be provided to the human resources Unit of the Department for Child Protection for revision and alignment with wider supervision procedures and workforce planning for the department. This includes the work undertaken to deliver recommendations 59 and 131.</p> <p>The draft procedure was developed not only to facilitate professional development and performance management, but also case based supervision to discuss specific children and provide professional and personal support where required.</p> <p>Providing regular supervision to youth workers also requires reform of the current rostering system in Residential Care to ensure staff are available to meet with their supervisors. This work is underway and ensuring staff are available for training, supervision and development opportunities is a core specification for a new rostering system.</p>		

149	Apply the following standards across residential care:	Accepted in principle
	<p>a. no child under 10 years to be housed in a residential care facility except where necessary to keep a sibling group together</p> <p>b. no child to be housed in a facility with more than four children, except where necessary to keep a sibling group together.</p>	Phase 3
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Where possible the Department for Child Protection will not place children under 10 years of age in residential care.</p> <p>When there are no available family-based placements, residential care is considered. It is a priority of the South Australian Government that family-based care options are substantially increased.</p> <p>Department for Child Protection also endeavours to never house more than four children in one house. Four new three bedroom houses are being built at the Para West Campus for residential care. Further options for building similar sized houses and closing down and decommissioning larger facilities are being investigated.</p> <p>Occasionally there are children under the age of 10 who cannot be placed in family-based care due to having highly complex needs or disabilities, or it is deemed in their best interests to maintain sibling groups together. Strict criteria will be developed to ensure that these children are placed in residential care only when absolutely necessary. This work will be delivered by the Single Placement Unit project.</p>		

150	Recruit a sufficient complement of staff to:	Accepted in principle
	<div>a. cease using commercial carers in residential care facilities</div> <div>b. develop a casual list to provide staff who are available on a flexible basis</div> <div>c. abandon single-handed shifts.</div>	Phase 2
<div><div>STATUS</div><div><p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p><p>In 2015, the Department for Education and Child Development reviewed and reformed the centralised residential care recruitment process. This involved implementing a number of improvements that resulted in a significantly more effective system. Since the reforms, the number of applications received and successful applicants appointed has increased significantly.</p><p>The recruitment process is subject to ongoing review to ensure it continues to increase the number of successful and suitable applicants recruited.</p><p>The ongoing use of this recruitment process, combined with the implementation of a number of recommendations from <i>The life they deserve</i>, will help to achieve the targets set in this recommendation.</p><p>A list of casual staff able to be deployed on a flexible basis currently exists and is used by the Residential Care Directorate. This will continue to be utilised and expanded if necessary.</p><p>Part C of this recommendation is not supported at this time. A number of safeguarding initiatives and employee screening and vetting processes have been implemented during the period of the Royal Commission that increase the safety of children in residential care. The Department for Child Protection will continue to evaluate and implement other initiatives that may further contribute to the safety of children. This includes the implementation of a number of other recommendations from <i>The life they deserve</i>, including introducing a probationary period for new child and youth support workers, reforming the care concern management system, establishing better tracking systems regarding employee behaviour, creating complaints mechanisms that ensure children’s concerns are heard, and delivering education programs for children about their rights.</p></div></div>		

151	Abandon any plan to outsource any residential or emergency care service that is currently delivered by the agency.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection is committed to ensuring residential care services are a highly reliable, well-managed and robustly governed part of the child protection system. This will only be achieved through the implementation of a number of <i>The life they deserve</i> recommendations and a program of work to improve the operational design and corporate governance of the Residential Care Directorate.</p> <p>It is priority for the South Australian Government that the number of children in commercial care is reduced. The government recognises that the best form of care for children is family-based care, and we are working to increase the number of kin and foster carers accordingly. However, in the short term, there will be a need for an increase in the number of residential care facilities in order to decrease the reliance on commercial care.</p> <p>During this process, it is likely that the outsourcing of residential care placements will continue, while there is not enough capacity within the department. This includes an increase in placements managed by non-government organisations to be commenced shortly.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will continue to closely monitor and review outcomes for children across all residential care placements. Monitoring will inform decisions regarding the optimal residential care placement mix.</p>		
152	Develop a secure therapeutic care model, supported by legislation, to permit children to be detained in a secure therapeutic care facility but with an order of the Supreme Court required before a child is so detained. The model should include regular evaluation of outcomes for children.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle</p> <p>A secure therapeutic model has previously been recommended in the <i>Our Best Investment: A state plan to protect and advance the interests of children report</i> and Children in State Care Commission of Inquiry. However, consultation with the wider child protection sector, including former guardians for children and young people found that the model was not supported.</p> <p>In light of this feedback, a number of alternative therapeutic options to support children at significant risk of harming themselves or others have been pursued by government instead of a secure facility.</p> <p>However, the South Australian Government will continue to explore whether there is a need and support for a consolidated secure therapeutic model of care.</p> <p>The Coordinating Group for Care and Protection, established in response to recommendation 76, will be tasked with allocating a lead agency to undertake broad and intensive consultation and if supported, to develop a number of options for a secure therapeutic facility. A business case would then be developed for consideration by the committee, and if endorsed, for the approval of Cabinet.</p> <p>The design and implementation of such a facility would be subject to further consultation with government agencies, the community, and children with experiences of care.</p>		

153	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to enable carers to apply to be appointed an 'other person guardian' where children who are subject to long term orders have been in their care for a minimum period of two years, or such lesser period as the court in its absolute discretion determines is appropriate in the circumstances.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The government is committed to enhancing certainty, stability and attachment for children and young people across the child protection system. This recommendation will be implemented through the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016. Following the commencement of the new Act, the Department for Child Protection will update its policies and procedures to reflect the recommendation.		
154	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to provide that biological parents who oppose an application for the appointment of an 'other person guardian' bear the onus of proving to the court on the balance of probabilities why the order should not be made.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Recommendation 154 will be implemented through the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016.		
155	Establish an independent assessment panel to consider applications for other person guardianship, in accordance with the following procedures: a. the application to be made by a foster parent in person or by a caseworker or foster care support worker on behalf of the carer b. an initial review be carried out by the assessment panel to determine the utility of referring the application for a full assessment c. the application to be referred to the caseworker or such other appropriate person as is available to carry out the assessment and prepare the case plan in a timely manner d. when the assessment has been completed and case plan prepared, the application to be referred back to the assessment panel for final determination e. all decisions of the assessment panel are to be final.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. In 2016, the Department of Education and Child Development designed and implemented an independent assessment panel for other person guardianship (OPG) as part of the Growing OPG project. The functions and purpose of this panel are consistent to those recommended. The growing OPG project team will review the panel, its membership requirements and the processes and procedures that guide its operation to ensure that parts A to E of this recommendation are delivered by the panel.		

156	Promote the use of section 80 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> for the delegation of decision making to support potential applications for other person guardianship.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Section 80 of the <i>Family and Community Service Act 1972</i> has been repealed and redrafted into the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016.</p> <p>Once the legislative changes recommended in <i>The life they deserve</i> are implemented, promotion of the use of the redrafted section will be supported by publicly available guides (based on internal practice guides developed in response to recommendation 114) and a carer engagement strategy.</p>	
157	Consider the question of adoption where that is in the best interests of the child and an other person guardianship order would not be appropriate.	Accepted
		Phase 3
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation is consistent with promoting permanency and stability for children.</p> <p>The Adoption (Review) Amendment Bill 2016 was introduced into Parliament by the South Australian Government on 21 September 2016. The Bill enacts recommendations of the independent review of the Adoption Act by Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan.</p> <p>A review of adoption services provided by the government is also underway. The aim of the review is to set up a new practice framework that provides for the current service delivery requirements and responds to the potential new legislation.</p> <p>The commissioner deals with adoption and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at p. 369 of her report and states, "The long term negative ramifications of forced adoption on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families cannot be overstated."</p> <p>In considering this recommendation and its effect, the Department for Child Protection will consult with the Aboriginal community about appropriate practice and policy for Aboriginal children.</p>	
158	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to require the minister to provide or arrange assistance to care leavers aged between 18 and 25 years. Assistance should specifically include the provision of information about services and resources; financial and other support to obtain housing, education, training and employment; and access to legal advice and health care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation is implemented in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016.</p>	

159	Expand financial counselling services to manage access to post-care financial support from the agency provided in accordance with recommendation 158.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The South Australian Government understands that young people transitioning from care at any age are particularly vulnerable, and need support from services that are flexible, approachable and tailored to their needs. In response to the Royal Commission's recommendations, the government will expand financial counselling services within the Department for Child Protection to support care leavers beyond the age of 18.	

160	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> to permit care leavers to access, free of charge, original and copy documents that relate to them from the agency, approved carers, and any non- government agencies contracted to provide care to them.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. This recommendation is implemented in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016. Guidelines will be developed that outline the circumstances in which the Department for Child Protection must give access to a document or information. This will include consideration about how documents that relate to care leavers would be sourced from carers and non-government agencies.	

161	Continue to make modified payments to foster and kinship carers where the care leaver is engaged in tertiary education, apprenticeship, or any post-high school training, and where their best interests would be served by remaining in foster or kinship care until the qualification is completed.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Under the current Families SA Education Grant scheme, payments are made to foster and kinship carers to help with the costs of preschool and school fees and other related costs. The current scheme also provides grants to carers of young people over 18 years of age where they are enrolled in full-time secondary education and still have an allocated Families SA case file.</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts the Royal Commission’s findings that we need to do more to support young people in the child protection system to go on to further education and to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>As a first step, the government will invest to support recommendation 161, and make modified payments to foster and kinship carers where the care leaver is engaged in tertiary education, apprenticeship, or any post-high school training, and where their best interests would be served by remaining in foster or kinship care until the qualification is completed.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will further consider how children under the guardianship of the minister who are not in home-based care arrangements can also be supported to engage in post-school education.</p>		
162	Review the Rapid Response policy to identify opportunities to expand priority services to care leavers up to the age of 25.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>As part of the government’s response to the Royal Commission, the Coordinating Group for Care and Protection will oversee the development of a rebranded and renamed Rapid Response policy that will articulate a new and expanded approach to priority service provision to children in care.</p> <p>Once this work has been completed, the Coordinating Group for Care and Protection will start work to identify opportunities to expand priority service offerings to care leavers up to the age of 25. The government accepts that consideration will need to be given to instances where an expansion of an existing service model is not appropriate (ie the program is really only relevant for young people up to 18 years of age), and where new services need to be developed to meet the needs of care leavers over 18 years of age.</p> <p>Where ever possible, the design of new services for young people leaving care up to 25 years will include the participation of and consultation with young people with experience in care.</p>		

163	Prepare a new service model and work instruction for leaving care that incorporates the relevant elements of the National Approach, including specific reference to supporting care leavers who want to access further education and training.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Royal Commission has identified that neither the existing Families SA Transition from Care service model nor the Transition from Care work instruction make any reference to the national approach. As such, the Department for Child Protection is tasked with developing a new service model and work instruction for leaving care, incorporating relevant elements of the national approach. The new model should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• strategies to improve South Australia's performance under standard 13 of the national standards for out of home care• strategies for translating the three phases of transition (planning, transition and after-care) into practical case management• consideration of the particular needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children in kinship care arrangements and children with a disability• specific reference to support for care leavers who want to access further education and training. <p>The new service model should also include a new add-on service for young people planning their move to independence in accordance with recommendation 164.</p> <p>This work will be led by the Policy and Planning area of the Department for Child Protection, in close consultation with practitioners in the field.</p>		
164	Redeploy transition-from-care caseworkers to provide an add-on service for young people planning their move to independence.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Resources have been provided to the Department for Child Protection so that appropriately qualified staff are assigned to cases where young people are transitioning from care.</p> <p>Existing transition-from-care youth workers will not be redeployed until the new service model is developed, and a new add-on service for young people leaving care is adequately scoped (recommendation 163).</p> <p>As per the findings of the Royal Commission, this service should be available to support a young person's transition from care through all three phases of transitioning from care, and should be offered to young people for whom continuous support by Department for Child Protection is appropriate.</p>		

165	Reach an administrative arrangement with the CREATE Foundation to provide it with the names and contact details of children entering care and/or their carers (as appropriate).	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The CREATE Foundation is the national peak consumer body representing children and young people with out-of-home-care experiences.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will work with CREATE to reach an administrative arrangement in order to implement recommendation 165.</p> <p>This will allow for all young people to be signed up to CREATE's clubCREATE service as a matter of course when entering care. clubCREATE connects children and young people with experiences of care and delivers events and empowerment programs to encourage new friendships and skills.</p> <p>The administrative arrangement will provide for the responsible sharing of information and privacy provisions, including provisions for children to opt out should they choose.</p>		
166	Fund the development of a smartphone application that provides young people with up-to-date information about services and entitlements when leaving care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The CREATE foundation has developed a smart phone application that provides information and support to young people leaving care called Sortli (<i>Sort your life out</i>). The app acts as a single digital portal for access to a range of existing information relevant to young people transitioning to independence, and was developed in consultation with children and young people in out of home care.</p> <p>A review by the then Families SA found that Sortli would complement existing tools. The app is also supported by all the eastern States and several key non-government organisations in South Australia.</p> <p>It is expected that the app will be ready for launch in 2017, with content that is local and relevant to South Australia.</p>		

167	Review contractual conditions governing service specifications for non-government independent living programs to develop greater flexibility in the age of admission and the age of discharge from programs.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
The Department for Child Protection currently funds a number of non-government independent living programs, and there is some flexibility in these arrangements for young people to remain in programs after the age of 18 years. However, much more needs to be done to support vulnerable young people leaving care beyond the age of 18.		
The Department for Child Protection will lead this review. In conducting this review, the Department will work the non-government sector to identify if any opportunities exist within current contractual arrangements, or where different service models could be pursued so that vulnerable young people can transition to independence at their own pace, rather than experience a stop-start service provision.		
168	Fund Housing SA to develop innovative housing models, particularly those that use supported share housing where appropriate for care leavers.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.		
The Department of Treasury and Finance will work with Housing SA to develop a business case to identify options, undertake a cost-benefit analysis and recommend options to Cabinet by 31 March 2017. Options considered might include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lead tenant housing• improved and rapid pathways into public and community housing• assertive outreach models• integrated housing and support facilities• regional and remote specific models.		
This work will build on the options identified as part of the 90 Day project: Transitioning From Care To Independence completed in 2016. More information about this 90 Day project is available at http://publicsector.sa.gov.au/culture/90-day-projects/transition-pathways-for-young-people-exiting-guardianship-of-the-minister/		

169	Fund a pilot program of intensive case management assistance for vulnerable care leavers, to be delivered by an agency with established relationships with vulnerable children in care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will commission from the non-government sector proposals for a pilot program for care leavers who face vulnerability.</p> <p>The government's response has committed new funding to support this pilot.</p> <p>Prior to approaching the market, the department will conduct a review of the diverse needs of the young people transitioning from care to determine the target group for the pilot project.</p> <p>The pilot will be subject to evaluation within 12 months to determine its effectiveness.</p>	
170	Conduct a review of the needs of the population currently accessing Relationships Australia's services to identify the specific needs of service users.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection currently funds Relationships Australia to deliver post-care services to 2017 to 2018. These services are available to anyone over the age of 18 who has spent six months or more in out-of-home care in South Australia.</p> <p>The department will undertake a review of Relationships Australia's services to identify the needs of the broad range of South Australian's who take up these services. The review will include a data analysis piece, using data from both the C3MS system and Relationships Australia's database.</p>	
171	Make a significant injection of funds into post-care services currently provided by Relationships Australia, to enable these to be delivered more flexibly and more assertively.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The government accepts this recommendation and will provide further funding to Relationships Australia's post-care services.</p>	

172	Provide specialist training and documented guidance to staff within the agency, as well as home-based carers and carers engaged through commercial agencies, as to their roles and responsibilities with respect to identifying and reporting conduct that may amount to a care concern, and the processes that follow such a report.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The significant reforms recommended in <i>The life they deserve</i> will result in substantial reforms to the care concern management system for children in care.</p> <p>To ensure a new system is implemented effectively, the Department for Child Protection will initiate the Care Concern Management reform project. This project will deliver a care concern system that better identifies, records, investigates and responds to concerns about the safety of children in care.</p> <p>A staged approach to establishing new processes, business units and policies will be undertaken. New documented guidance and training will be made available to all staff as the new care concern management System is fully implemented.</p> <p>Documented guidance and training materials will be developed concurrently with the design and implementation of other care concern related recommendations. This training and guidance will be made available to commercial care staff.</p> <p>Additional work will be undertaken to adapt training and documented guidance for delivery to family-based carers.</p>		
173	Consider developing technology to provide children in care with a user-friendly mechanism to engage with caseworkers in the care team and other responsible adults about their experiences and concerns.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Capturing the views and concerns of children about their care, day-to-day experiences and the involvement of their carers and case workers in their lives is pivotal to ensuring children are at the centre of our system.</p> <p>To better capture this information, Families SA implemented <i>Viewpoint</i>, an audio computer assisted self-interviewing tool used by children and young people in care to provide feedback about their lives and experiences.</p> <p>Children are invited to provide feedback about a number of topics including their participation in decision making, sense of security, community activity and family contact and connection. The Viewpoint questionnaire is a targeted way for children and young people to have a say about what's important to them. This can be done on either laptops or smart phones and tablets.</p> <p><i>Viewpoint</i> is an important tool for ensuring that the voices of children and young people are not only captured, but listened to and acted upon. The information collected not only helps case workers to better understand children's experiences and concerns, but helps the department to identify trends about the experiences of children in care. The ongoing use of <i>Viewpoint</i> as an innovative technological solution will be continually evaluated and improved, to ensure it is useful, accessible and utilised by case workers to its full potential.</p>		

174	Review and implement the Structured Decision Making® care concern screening criteria tool for use by Call Centre practitioners.	Not accepted
		N/A
REASON		
<p>The South Australian Government does not accept this recommendation.</p> <p>In 2015, the Structured Decision Making® (SDM) Tool was trialled for the use of assessing care concerns. A Department for Education and Child Development evaluation of the tool for this purpose found that it was not appropriate and resulted in a number of inaccurate assessments.</p> <p>Alterations to the tool were considered, but the review found that it was not necessarily specific characteristics of the SDM tool, but the use of an actuarial assessment tool in general that caused some inaccurate assessments.</p> <p>Practitioners specifically trained in care concern assessment make informed and appropriate assessments of care concerns based on a number of contextual factors about carers, care environments and children's history in care. These factors may not be considered by intake workers in the Call Centre when recording a notification from a member of the public and processing information through the use of a tool. A specialised assessment by trained practitioners is therefore supported over the use of a single tool in the Call Centre.</p> <p>Instead of using the SDM or another tool, implementation of recommendation 172 and the development of robust procedures and the delivery of training to staff are expected to result in an improved care concern assessment process.</p>		
175	Establish a panel in the agency to determine the appropriate response pathway with respect to a care concern that is not diverted by the Call Centre to the field, but noting that all allegations that raise a suspicion of sexual abuse (except those which are historical in nature or have otherwise been addressed) must be investigated by the investigations unit.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>In March 2016, the Care Concerns Assessment and Management Panel (CCAMP) was established.</p> <p>The CCAMP is chaired by executive staff in the Department for Child Protection and includes external independent representation from the Child and Family Welfare Association and Incident Management division in the Department for Education and Child Development. The panel utilises this diverse range of knowledge and experience to make care concern determinations and identify ongoing, systemic issues. The panel and improvements to other interrelated systems will ensure that care concerns will receive more appropriate responses.</p> <p>The CCAMP terms of reference will be revised to ensure the panel aligns with the requirements in this recommendation. This work will be undertaken as part of the Care Concern Management reform project discussed in the response to recommendation 172.</p>		

176	Establish in the agency an investigations unit independent of the operations of the agency to investigate matters referred to it by the panel, and staff that unit with a multidisciplinary team of investigators with expertise in child protection and law enforcement, and provide training and guidelines as to the scope of their roles.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>In June 2016, responsibility for the investigation of serious care concerns was transferred to the Incident Management Unit in the Corporate Services business team of the Department for Education and Child Development. From that point, all serious care concerns have been investigated by experienced investigators who are independent to child protection operations staff. Investigators have expertise in child protection and law enforcement.</p> <p>Investigators from that unit have been transferred into the new investigation unit, now established in the Department for Child Protection.</p>		
177	Ensure that all care concern notifications are investigated in a timely manner: a. investigations should commence within 48 hours of the receipt of a notification b. in the absence of ongoing criminal proceedings or special reasons, investigations should be completed within six weeks from receipt of the notification.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Currently, upon receipt of a care concern referral, the Care Concern Management Unit reviews available information and commences gathering information within 48 hours.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will develop policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure a timely response to all concerns received, and to ensure that, in the absence of ongoing criminal proceedings or special reasons, investigations are completed within six weeks from receipt of the notification. This will be delivered as part of the Care Concern Management reform project discussed in the response to recommendation 172.</p>		

178	Require a strategy meeting to be held at the start of all investigations undertaken by the investigations unit.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The requirement to hold a strategy meeting before all investigations by the proposed investigations unit is supported.</p> <p>For strategy meetings to be effective, a number of external partners will need to be involved in meetings, depending on the nature of the care concern. Therefore, consultation will be held with SA Police, non-government organisations, SA Health and other external agencies to ensure their views and requirements are considered in the development of a procedure to support strategy meetings. Strategy meetings for care concerns will be modelled on and align with strategy discussions as documented in the <i>Interagency Code of Practice</i>.</p> <p>Additional resources have been committed to investigating care concerns in the Department for Child Protection. Deployment of investigators will assist in ensuring strategy meetings are held at the start of all investigations undertaken by the investigations unit.</p> <p>A care concern strategy meeting procedure will be developed as part of the wider program to develop the new care concern management system based on recommendations from <i>The life they deserve</i>.</p>		
179	Define the standards against which deficiencies in the care provided to a child in care should be assessed.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>There is a significant need to define and document the standards against which deficiencies in the care provided to a child are assessed. Currently, assessments rely on the expertise and experience of individuals investigating care concerns and brief, documented definitions about what constitutes a serious, moderate or minor care concern.</p> <p>As part of the work to develop documented guidance and training based on the new care concern management system (recommendation 172), the current standards by which deficiencies in care are identified will be reviewed, redefined and documented.</p> <p>Instead of a focus on culpability of staff or carers, the standards will be based on the minimum level of acceptable care that should be provided to children. This will be based on the Standards of Alternative Care in South Australia and the National Standards for Out of Home care.</p> <p>This work will be documented and communicated to ensure all staff understand and are aware of the required standards of care, and how to identify where deficiencies exist. This work will be delivered as part of the Care Concern Management reform project discussed in the response to recommendation 172.</p> <p>As a result of the review of these standards it is possible that the categories for care concern ratings will be reviewed and changed.</p>		

180	Clarify the powers available to investigators, including putting in place appropriate delegations and authorities pursuant to sections 45 and 47 of the <i>Family and Community Services Act 1972</i> and section 19 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> .	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 give effect to this recommendation.</p>	
181	Ensure that staff are available in the investigations unit who are trained in forensic interviewing of children when this service is required.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The majority of forensic interviews of children are conducted by SAPOL and SA Health. On occasion it is necessary for investigating staff from the Care Concern Investigation Unit (CCIU) to conduct forensic interviews.</p> <p>In 2015, as a result of changes to the <i>Statutes Amendment (Vulnerable Witnesses) Act 2015</i>, Care Concern Investigation staff were provided with an opportunity to undertake once-off training in forensic interviewing provided by Deakin University and funded by the Attorney-General's Department under the Disability Justice Plan. This training is of a high quality, suitable for staff of the Care Concern Investigation Unit, and will be accessed accordingly.</p>	
182	Amend section 104 of the <i>Summary Procedure Act 1921</i> to permit the filing in committal proceedings of a transcript of a recorded interview with a child under the age of 14 years that has been verified by a person in attendance at the interview, other than an investigating officer as defined in the Act.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p>Recommendation 182 will be implemented by amending section 104 of the <i>Summary Procedure Act 1921</i> (SA). The Summary Procedure (Indictable Offences) Amendment Bill 2016 (SA) ('the Bill') contains a provision which implements the recommendation. The draft Bill was publicly available for consultation on the yourSAy website until 18 October 2016, and was introduced into Parliament on 16 November 2016.</p> <p>The Bill contains a provision that will allow a committal brief to contain a witness statement from a child of or under the age of 14 years which "is in the form of an audio visual record or audio record of an interview with the witness that is accompanied by a written transcript verified by an investigating officer or person of a prescribed class who was present at the interview as a complete record of the interview".</p>	

183	Require investigators to record an outcome as 'undetermined' in any case in which there is insufficient evidence to make a definitive finding.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Subject to consultation with other users of C3MS, as of June 2017, all cases in which there is insufficient evidence to make a definitive finding will now have an out outcome of 'undetermined' recorded in C3MS.</p>	
184	<p>Establish a response unit within the directorate responsible for quality and practice to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide advice to front-line staff about care concerns b. provide a report to the chief executive of the agency outlining responses and intended actions to issues identified in an investigation report. This should be provided within four weeks of the response unit receiving the investigation report c. undertake a monitoring role in respect of all care concern notifications d. analyse trends in care concern data to proactively address systems issues and inform the management of staff and carers e. make recommendations to the chief executive of the agency as to proposed improvements in response to identified systems issues. 	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>A team will be established in the new Department for Child Protection to undertake the roles described in this recommendation. Further consideration will be given to where this team is placed in a new organisational structure as part of wider reforms to care concern management.</p> <p>The team will work closely with front line staff and the Care Concern Investigations unit to ensure efficient and streamlined information flow to front-line staff for advice and to senior executives and the chief executive about systems issues.</p> <p>The team and its roles will be considered and designed as part of the Care Concern Management reform project discussed in the response to recommendation 172.</p>	
185	Establish a liaison function between the response unit and SAPOL, particularly with respect to identification of aspects of a care concern investigation that may be commenced by the agency while criminal proceedings are pending.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A protocol between SAPOL and the Department for Child Protection regarding information exchange and pending actions regarding open investigations will be developed by the two agencies.</p> <p>The protocol will be developed as part of the Care Concern Management reform project discussed in the response to recommendation 172.</p>	

186	Require the agency to provide quarterly data to the minister and the Guardian for Children and Young People about care concerns, including:	Accepted
	a. the number of care concern notifications received and their response pathway b. how many care concern investigations have been completed c. whether investigation timeframes have been met and the reasons for timeframes not being met d. the outcomes of investigations e. how identified systems issues are being addressed.	Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection currently report to the minister and the Guardian for Children and Young People on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the number of care concern notifications received and their response pathway b) how many care concern investigations have been completed c) whether investigation timeframes have been met and the reasons for timeframes not being met d) the outcomes of investigations. <p>Including information about e) how identified systems issues are being addressed will depend on the implementation of the Care Concern Response Unit recommended in recommendation 184.</p> <p>The Guardian for Children and Young People will be consulted regarding the design of reports and frequency of provision.</p>		
187	Develop an Aboriginal recruitment and retention strategy in the agency as part of a broader workforce strategy.	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>Work was already underway within the then Families SA prior to the Royal Commission's final report on a draft Aboriginal recruitment and retention strategy and action plan, including key performance indicators and reporting requirements. Strategies aimed at increasing Aboriginal representation within the workforce being considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted recruitment advertising • a focus on increasing the number of Aboriginal employees employed on an ongoing basis • priority access to study support • career development pathways • building cultural awareness and knowledge across the agency • supporting and actively developing a workplace environment that is culturally safe. <p>However, in light of the strong views of the Royal Commission, the Department for Child Protection will conduct further consultation with departmental staff, and with the Office for the Public Sector on the draft strategy prior to seeking endorsement from the chief executive.</p> <p>Once complete, the Aboriginal recruitment and retention strategy should not just align with the overall workforce strategy (recommendation 30), but the two strategies should be considered to be two sides of the same coin. To ensure both strategies are given equal weight in all decisions relating to recruitment and retention, responsibility for both strategies will be located within the same area of the department.</p>		

188	Review procedures to streamline the sources of internal cultural advice to the agency.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will review procedures to streamline the sources of internal cultural advice provided across the department. This will be commenced in 2017.</p> <p>The South Australian Government knows that, to help address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in the child protection system, an increase in Aboriginal staff is required to ensure there is capacity to provide cultural advice across the department at different levels of complexity.</p> <p>The Aboriginal Recruitment and Retention strategy (recommendation 187) will aim to attract and retain Aboriginal employees to the child protection workforce through a number of strategies. An increase in Aboriginal employees across the child protection workforce will improve the capacity of the department to provide cultural advice both operationally and strategically.</p>	
189	Review practice guidance, funding arrangements and the range of declared agencies to ensure that a recognised Aboriginal agency is consulted on all placement decisions involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, in accordance with the provisions of section 5 of the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> .	Accepted
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will conduct a review of the practice guidance, funding arrangements and the range of declared agencies. As part of the review, the department will establish clear roles and responsibilities for agencies, which will be consulted on all placement decisions.</p> <p>This review will include consultation and engagement with declared agencies and Aboriginal Communities.</p>	

190	Establish a dedicated family scoping unit.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>In accordance with the Royal Commission's findings, a dedicated scoping unit will be established within the Department for Child Protection to research family connections and prepare genograms.</p> <p>Funding for an additional four FTEs has been provided through this response to establish the team.</p> <p>Investing in a dedicated scoping unit so that potential kinship placements for children can be sourced quickly is critical in making sure children are in stable, supportive placements when they cannot live safely with their parents, and to stem demand for residential care and commercial care.</p> <p>The unit should develop strong relationships with Aboriginal communities and organisations, including a strong partnership with Nunkuwarrin Yunti's Link-Up service to ensure that best practice services are built upon, and not duplicated.</p> <p>It is expected that the scoping unit will be operational in 2017, pending recruitment of staff.</p> <p>Once established, consideration will be given to offering regular training to practitioners and offering short rotational placements to agency practitioners, as suggested by the Royal Commission.</p>		
191	Provide all practitioners in the child protection system with training, support and clinical supervision to give them the knowledge, skills and techniques to work effectively with Aboriginal children and families, including, where appropriate, the specific skills required to work effectively in remote Aboriginal communities.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Working effectively with Aboriginal children and families is core business for all staff of the department, and is critical to realising better outcomes for Aboriginal children.</p> <p>The new human resources unit in the Department for Child Protection will lead a renewed effort towards providing all staff with training, support and supervision to help them work effectively and to better understand the needs of Aboriginal children and families.</p> <p>The ongoing commitment of the department to implementing (recommendation 191) will have a positive impact on cultural competency (recommendation 237), attraction and retention of Aboriginal workers (recommendation 187), and encouraging appropriate engagement with the Aboriginal community by the department.</p>		

192	Use the proposed Early Intervention Research Directorate to identify evidence-based service models for early intervention that meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>One of the initial priority areas of the Early Intervention Research Directorate (EIRD) is to reduce the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal children in the child protection system through better enhanced understanding and suitable approaches to early intervention and prevention.</p>	
193	Outsource the services currently provided by Kanggarendi to an appropriately qualified and experienced non-government organisation.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through the consultation conducted to inform this response, there were many passionate views from stakeholders across the child protection system about recommendation 193 – both in support of and in opposition to the Royal Commission's findings. Based on this feedback, it is clear that more work needs to be done to determine the South Australian government's position.</p> <p>This recommendation is accepted in principle subject to the development of a cost benefit analysis by the Department for Child Protection for Cabinet consideration. This analysis should explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the impact on the department of accepting this recommendation in terms of developing local knowledge, capability and capacity across whole of South Australia • ability of non-government organisation sector to effectively deliver equivalent services • respective roles and responsibilities, referral pathways, including appropriate referral to early intervention services and to statutory services where required • strong contracting and performance outcomes management and ensuring accountability • resourcing requirements. 	
194	Commission not-for-profit agencies to develop service models that can respond to higher-risk Aboriginal families with multiple, complex needs.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The South Australian Government agrees that there is currently a dearth in services available to high risk Aboriginal families with complex, overlapping needs such as homelessness, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse and mental health concerns.</p> <p>However, work needs to be undertaken in partnership with the non-government sector to support and build capacity to take on higher risk cases with multiple, complex needs.</p> <p>Through this response, the government has committed funding to commission this new service, and will work in partnership with the non-government sector to better meet the needs of non-statutory cases.</p>	

195	Ensure that local assessments of needs (LANs) specifically consider the needs of Aboriginal children and families and consult with local Aboriginal people and service providers.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through its response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission the South Australian Government will pilot three child and family assessment and referral networks (CFARNs) to develop the new service model and to better understand its interaction with the existing child protection system and services (recommendation 51). The Royal Commission has recommended that CFARNs develop the local assessments of needs referred to in this recommendation.</p> <p>The CFARN pilots will include the development of local assessment of needs for the local communities. This assessment will specifically consider the needs of Aboriginal children and families and consult with the local Aboriginal community and service providers.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the CFARN pilots will commence by July 2017</p> <p>The CFARN pilots will be evaluated after twelve months to determine whether the initiative should be scaled up and rolled out state-wide.</p>		
196	Place local Aboriginal support services within child and family assessment and referral networks to promote service coordination and act as a visible point of entry.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through its response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission the South Australian Government will pilot three child and family assessment and referral networks (CFARNs) to develop the new service model and to better understand its interaction with the existing child protection system and services (recommendation 51).</p> <p>Two of the three CFARN pilots will be delivered by the South Australian Government in the first instance, with a view to transitioning to a non-government led service as recommended by the Royal Commission.</p> <p>The three pilots will each consider the best way to incorporate local Aboriginal support services within their network.</p> <p>The CFARN pilots will be evaluated after twelve months to determine whether the initiative should be scaled up and rolled out statewide.</p>		

197	Adopt a culturally appropriate assessment tool, such as Winangay, for the assessment of foster parents and kinship carers in the Aboriginal community, initially in remote communities, and more widely if the tool proves promising.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will consider a trial of the Winangay Tool on the APY lands and other remote and rural communities within South Australia. A decision will be made about whether it will be adopted based on the outcomes of this trial.</p> <p>To date, the Department for Child Protection has supported a trial of the Winangay Tool for carers within both metropolitan and country areas. The trial commenced in July 2016 and was delivered by the Aboriginal Family Support Services (AFSS).</p>	
198	Require the agency to report to the Minister and the Guardian for Children and Young People quarterly on service criteria 3.1.4.1, 3.1.4.4 and 3.1.4.6, which form part of standard 3.1.4 of the Standards of Alternative Care in South Australia.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>This recommendation is supported in principle because it depends on upgrades to the C3MS database. At present C3MS does not capture information that would enable reporting against 3.1.4.4 or 3.1.4.6.</p> <p>In the meantime, the Department for Child Protection will provide consolidated data to the minister and the guardian on the number and percentage of Cultural Maintenance Plan (service criteria 3.1.4.1).</p>	
199	Consult with each remote Aboriginal community about the implementation of the recommendations following this report, as part of ongoing engagement with communities about the strategic direction of services to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of their children.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through the government's response to <i>The life they deserve</i>, we have committed new funding to support consultation with remote Aboriginal communities about the implementation of the reforms outlined in <i>A fresh start</i>.</p> <p>A sector-wide approach, based on strong cultural guidance is essential to implement this recommendation. The South Australian Government is committed to a collaborative approach to planning the consultation, informed by the views of Aboriginal communities about when and how consultation should occur for their particular community, and who should be involved.</p> <p>This recommendation will be led by the Department for Child Protection.</p>	

200	Offer stable employment arrangements with competitive, ongoing retention allowances to attract and recruit six permanent APY Lands-based workers to support the agency's fly-in fly-out teams.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016. Six permanent APY Lands-based positions have been advertised, with the selection process due to be finalised at the end of October 2016. Appropriate relocation, accommodation, attraction and retention allowances are to be negotiated with the successful candidates. The roles were advertised on an ongoing basis in order to provide stability of employment to the successful applicants.		
201	Actively pursue joint training opportunities for agencies in remote communities and require operational managers from agencies to meet regularly to identify areas for collaboration and to resolve issues of concern.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. There are a number of forums that already exist which promote inter-agency collaboration between state and commonwealth government departments in remote communities. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• APY Lands Steering Committee (APYLSC) and its Child Safety and Wellbeing Subcommittee• West Coast Taskforce• Ceduna Service Reform Committee (this committee includes representation from non-government organisations) A number of training opportunities have been pursued through these partnerships, including forums and workshops. However, the South Australian Government acknowledges there is much more to be done in this topic. Collaboration, and collaborative training, between agencies in remote communities is supported by the Interagency Code of Practice (ICP) published in July 2016, which prescribes how agencies and organisations investigate suspicion of child abuse and neglect. The ICP is endorsed by state government agencies, as well as non-government organisations. Operational managers in the Department for Child Protection will be expected to utilise these existing structures and frameworks to continue to pursue opportunities for collaboration to the benefit of children and families in remote communities.		

202	Ensure that at least one principal Aboriginal consultant has experience and expertise in remote Aboriginal communities, including in the APY Lands.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Principal Aboriginal Consultant (PAC) roles are senior practice roles that provide strategic guidance to help the department respond more effectively to Aboriginal children and families, including strategies to maintain the cultural identity of children in care and training for staff in how to work more effectively with Aboriginal families.</p> <p><i>The life they deserve</i> report found more is to be done to ensure departmental staff in remote communities have access to PACs, and that at least one PAC has adequate experience and expertise in remote Aboriginal communities so that they can provide the support these staff need.</p> <p>There are currently two PACs dedicated to the Country Directorate, one of which has extensive experience in working with remote communities, including in the APY Lands.</p> <p>The human resources unit, Department for Child Protection will be tasked with implementing this recommendation in future recruitment processes. Consideration will be given to supporting the existing PACs to develop knowledge, experience and expertise pertinent to these remote communities or to recruiting additional PACs with these skills.</p>		
203	Identify opportunities to develop strength in the interpreter service available in remote communities, and ensure that the agency's practitioners use interpreters where possible. Consider the viability of interpreters accompanying the agency's fly-in fly-out teams.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>It is important for the Department for Child Protection to work with accredited interpreters and translators where informed consent is required or where there is the potential for a decision or action to have a critical impact upon a person's life.</p> <p>Staff working with interpreters and translators will require training to improve communication with Aboriginal clients and to have an understanding of when to use interpreters and translators.</p> <p>Consideration will be required to the training needs for the interpreters and translators to ensure they have a strong understanding of issues relating to children's development, safety and protection and the Statutory context in which the department operates.</p> <p>Implementation of this recommendation will have positive outcomes for children and young people residing on the APY Lands through ensuring that children, young people and families who require an interpreting service will receive the support they require to engage with the department on child protection issues. This will include ensuring a clear understanding of the content of safety agreements and other related matters concerning child protection.</p>		

204	Ensure that the agency's practitioners monitor children cared for in accordance with family care meeting agreements to ensure the safety of the child.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The majority of the department's child protection clients residing on the APY Lands are party to family care meeting agreements rather than orders of the Youth Court.</p> <p>Family care meeting agreements are often a more appropriate initial option for families on the APY Lands as they allow for children to be cared for by their extended family, whilst ensuring safety and retaining connection to community and family as well as Culture and identity.</p> <p>As part of the focus groups held with Department for Child Protection staff to inform the response, the issue was raised that in some circumstances families may sign a family care meeting agreement without being fully aware of its content or their obligations under the agreement. This can lead to placement breakdown. This issue will be considered in developing an appropriate model to use interpreter services in response to (recommendation 203).</p>		
205	Commission not-for-profit agencies to provide alternative care in areas close to the APY Lands, such as Alice Springs and Coober Pedy. Alternative care could include a mixture of foster care and residential care.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 3
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Implementing this recommendation will rely on government partnering with the non-government sector to build capacity and develop innovative service models across the child protection system. Any tender for such services will need to ensure that the successful organisation is culturally appropriate and/or trained.</p> <p>In response to recommendation 215, South Australia will advocate for the re-establishment and reinvigoration of the Central Australia Cross Border Working Group. The working group, established in 2012, comprises representatives from the state and territory governments of South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Government.</p> <p>When established, South Australia will lead discussion around the implementation of recommendation 205 at the working group.</p>		

206	Require that full carer assessments be completed in a timely manner in remote communities.	Accepted
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Additional resources have been provided to the Department for Child Protection through the government's response to address the existing backlog of full carer assessments (recommendation 109). Investing in kinship care upfront, as part of the first phase of reforms implemented, will result in long term benefits associated with finding stable, supportive placements for children with their communities.</p> <p>Addressing the backlog will have a positive impact on the time it takes for the department to complete full carer assessments, including in remote communities. Once the back log is addressed, further consideration will be given to how best to ensure carers in remote communities are assessed as a matter of priority.</p>	
207	Ensure that approved carers in remote communities receive the same level of support as carers elsewhere in the state, recognising the particular challenges faced by carers in these remote areas.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>As identified by the Royal Commission, there are particular challenges for carers in remote areas including distance and travel, access to staff and services and language barriers.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection has implemented a new model to support carers across the APY Lands, with its aim being that carers on the Lands will have face-to-face contact with departmental staff at least 10 times a year. The department is now developing resources to support staff to ensure the model continues to be implemented effectively.</p>	
208	Ensure that the unit tasked with investigating care concerns offers a service in remote communities equivalent to that provided elsewhere in the state.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>To ensure that remote communities are provided with a care concern investigation service equivalent to elsewhere in South Australia, a significant review of how current services are provided is required.</p> <p>This will be considered as part of the wider work to develop the new care concern management system. Training, resourcing and logistical needs such as travel and fly-in-fly-out options will be considered in order to meet the needs of remote communities. Additional work is also required to ensure that investigative responses by the Care Concern Investigation Unit are culturally appropriate and applicable to Aboriginal children and families.</p>	

209	Provide secure, long-term funding for playgroups in remote Aboriginal communities, administered by a single agency.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Australian Government currently funds playgroups in Amata and Mimili, through child and family centres.</p> <p>The South Australian Government agrees with the Royal Commission’s findings that playgroups play a vital role in the child protection system, by providing a non-threatening service to families that set the foundation for preschool and school attendance.</p> <p>To realise recommendation 209, the South Australian Government will advocate strongly to the Australian Government that it provide secure, long-term funding for playgroups in remote Aboriginal communities. As part of this process, the South Australian Government will also consider new ways we can boost our support for playgroups on the lands, including through the provision of in kind support to complement any additional Australian Government investment.</p>		
210	Establish an integrated administration information communication technology (ICT) system to allow access to a complete range of student data to children who move schools in remote Aboriginal communities.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Education and Child Development is currently implementing the Education Dashboard, a web-based system that provides increased accessibility to information about schools and school students. It draws upon information and data from multiple sources and can be viewed and accessed by staff both in DECD and the Department for Child Protection.</p> <p>This system will be used to provide an integrated administration ICT system to allow access to a complete range of student data to children who move schools in remote Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>Individual ‘views’ will be created for Department for Child Protection use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an executive view for senior staff and policy developers to identify trends in data about students in care• a caseworker view for use by case workers to better understand the individual education needs and progress of children they case manage. <p>This system will capture data about children who move schools in remote Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>The Education Dashboard is an advanced system for tracking student data in real-time and will result in benefits for all children in South Australia.</p>		

211	Provide additional funding to meet demand for the Walytjapiti program, and ensure that the agency keeps case files open for participants until satisfied about the child's ongoing wellbeing over a sustained period.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The Walytjapiti program started in 2012 and is administered by the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council. The program provides intensive family support for families who have children experiencing neglect or at high risk of neglect across four communities across the APY Lands.</p> <p>The Walytjapiti program is part of the Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) – part of the Commonwealth's response to the <i>Growing Them Strong, Together</i> report by the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the child protection system. It is an Australian Government-funded program.</p> <p>The Australian Government began funding the IFSS in the Northern Territory and in South Australia in 2011 to increase the well-being and safety of children where neglect has been substantiated, or is at high risk of occurring.</p> <p>The South Australian government strongly supports the provision of additional funding to the Walytjapiti program, and will urge the Australian Government to provide this additional funding as a matter of priority.</p>		
212	Commission an early intervention service for families in remote communities for whom the agency has lower level concerns and who could benefit from support to prevent escalation of issues.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Through the government's response, contingency funding has been provided to Department for Child Protection to fund an early intervention service for families and remote communities commissioned, based on the findings of Early Intervention Research Directorate (EIRD) work.</p> <p>The South Australian Government has partnered with the BetterStart Child Health and Development Research Group (Adelaide University), the Australian Centre for Child Protection and the Fraser Mustard Centre to establish the EIRD in response to recommendation 50.</p> <p>Initial areas of focus for the EIRD will be to identify evidence-based service models for early intervention that meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (recommendation 192). Another early EIRD project will be the development of a best practice evaluation framework for existing early intervention and prevention programs, so we can better understand which of our existing programs are effective and which need improvements.</p>		

213	Conduct an audit of services in remote Aboriginal communities to ensure access to adequate facilities to serve as a service hub for playgroups, preschools and other services that visit the community.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) has conducted a review to consider whether existing facilities in remote Aboriginal communities are of an appropriate standard, and where new facilities may be required to deliver services to the community into the future.</p> <p>Two sites were identified as requiring additional infrastructure – Mimili and Yalata.</p> <p>On 31 October 2016 the Prime Minister of Australia announced that infrastructure would be upgraded at Yalata. DECD is undertaking building works at Mimili.</p> <p>This work will inform the implementation of recommendation 214: to reform funding and structural arrangements to enable a single department to oversee the service hub facilities across all communities.</p> <p>Separately, DECD is also leading a revised Anangu Lands Education and Child Development Strategy which will consider how the department can best support the long-term needs of children in these remote communities.</p>		
214	Reform funding and structural arrangements to enable a single agency to oversee the service hub facilities across all communities. This agency should regularly map, in collaboration with the local community, the needs of children and families through an annual local assessment of needs.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Under current arrangements, service hub facilities across all APY Lands communities are maintained by a range of government departments, including the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD), SA Health and the Department for Communities and Social inclusion.</p> <p>Following the completion of the audit of service by DECD (recommendation 213), DECD will now develop an options paper to Cabinet by June 2017, identifying an appropriate lead department to oversee service hub facilities across all communities.</p>		

215	Establish a working group to promote collaborative practice between South Australian, Western Australian and Northern Territory agencies involved in the child protection system in the tri-border region, including working towards a cross-border legislative scheme for child protection across the three jurisdictions.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Premier has sought, and received, the support and partnership of the Northern Territory First Minister and the Western Australian Premier to improve the coordination of domestic and family violence initiatives in central Australia, specifically the NPY Lands. Through this partnership, the governments will work together to support a more coordinated service response in the cross-border region, with a view to developing a community-led strategy.</p> <p>In addition, South Australia will advocate for the re-establishment and reinvigoration of the Central Australia Cross Border Working Group. The working group, established in 2012, comprises representatives from state and territory governments South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Government. To ensure that the work of the group will not stall, the Department for Child Protection will ensure that its representative on the working group is appropriately senior.</p> <p>When established, a first priority of the group could be to consider the feasibility of harmonised laws for child protection across the three jurisdictions.</p>		
216	Review child protection service provision in Ceduna, Yalata and Oak Valley, including the viability of introducing a fly-in fly-out service.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will review provision of child protection services, and to consider the viability of introducing a fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) service model, for the Ceduna, Yalata and Oak Valley communities.</p> <p>Identifying any gaps in service provision, and developing new strategies to enhance the delivery of services to children and families will have a positive impact on children and young people living in the remote communities and improved service delivery in Ceduna, Yalata and Oak Valley.</p>		

217	Develop strategies to improve out-of-home care options in regional areas including: a. focusing attention on the recruitment of foster parents, particularly in areas of need b. identifying areas where there is a demand for residential care placements and develop facilities in those areas	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will work with foster care services, Uniting Care Wesley Country SA and Centacare Catholic Family Services Country SA to develop recruitment strategies for foster parents in areas of need. These recruitment strategies will be deployed from 2017.</p> <p>The South Australian Government has made an effort to expand the number of non-government operated placements for children and young people under guardianship of the minister, including in regional areas.</p> <p>This increase in non-government operated residential care placements will ensure that the most vulnerable children in commercial care receive nurturing, support and build positive stable relationships with specially trained and consistent carers.</p> <p>In addition, the ongoing development and expansion of foster care services is expected to produce significant positive outcomes for children and young people. Foster care provides stable, long-term placements for children and young people where they can develop meaningful relationships in a family setting.</p> <p>The department acknowledges that research, service model development and mapping of the required services will be an ongoing requirement to ensure the services meet the need and demand of regional South Australia.</p>		
218	Require the agency to develop a dedicated psychological service to deliver therapeutic services to children in care in regional areas.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Ensuring that children in care in regional areas have access to effective and flexible psychological and therapeutic services is pivotal in addressing their often complex needs.</p> <p>Currently, psychological and therapeutic services are delivered in regional areas, by child and adolescent mental health services and child protection services in SA Health. This includes the APY Lands.</p> <p>Only limited services are provided by the Department for Child Protection – Psychological Services unit in regional areas. Therefore consideration is being given to whether an expansion of services in regional areas should be led by Department for Child Protection or SA Health.</p> <p>The development of the Interagency Therapeutic Pathways Panel and the package of work to improve therapeutic assessment and support in response to <i>The life they deserve</i> will inform analysis of the needs of children in care in regional areas, gaps in service delivery and options for which department should be responsible for delivery and oversight of therapeutic service delivery in regional areas.</p>		

219	Collaborate with the Courts Administration Authority to improve access to justice for children in need of care in regional areas, including providing appropriate technology with respect to hearings in remote locations.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Courts Administration Authority (CAA) currently has audio visual links (AVL) in most permanently staffed locations in South Australia. A number of other agencies also have existing AVL infrastructure which can be utilised.</p> <p>The CAA will review services and ensure children in need of care have reliable access to this technology. A review will also be undertaken to determine how to best provide access to the services of the Sheriff's Office for hearings and meetings of the court in remote and regional areas.</p> <p>Delivered together, the findings of this work will inform how the government can improve access to justice for children in need of care in regional areas.</p> <p>The reviews will also identify regional areas where additional technological and Sherriff Office support services may be required.</p>		
220	Prepare an annual local assessment of needs for each regional area.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Through its response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission the South Australian Government will pilot three child and family assessment and referral networks (CFARNs) to develop the new service model and to better understand its interaction with the existing child protection system and services (recommendation 51). The Royal Commission has recommended that CFARNs develop the local assessments of needs, referred to in this recommendation.</p> <p>The three CFARN pilots will develop local assessment of needs for their local communities.</p> <p>The CFARN pilots will be evaluated after twelve months to determine whether the initiative should be scaled up and rolled out state-wide. Should the evaluation find that the CFARN model is not effective, consideration will be given to how the local assessments of needs can continue separately to the CFARN model.</p>		
221	Ensure that the agency's practitioners in regional areas have access to ongoing professional development, through locally delivered training and videoconferencing.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Through the government's response, the budget allocated to the Department for Child Protection to train all staff has been significantly increased.</p> <p>The new department is committed to ensuring all professional staff have access to professional development that appropriately balances locally delivered, face to face training models with other options such as videoconferencing.</p>		

222	Require the agency to develop attraction and retention strategies specific to building workforce sustainability in regional areas, including the use of financial incentives for staff.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The department's new human resources unit has been charged with leading the implementation of this recommendation.</p> <p>The department will consider successful strategies and learnings from other government departments which employ regional staff, such as Housing SA and the Department for Education and Child Development. Beyond financial incentives, consideration will also be given to leave arrangements, additional mentoring and management supports for regional-based staff.</p> <p>These strategies will align with the overarching workforce strategy of the department (recommendation 24), and the Aboriginal Recruitment and Retention strategy (recommendation 187).</p> <p>The commitment to ensure that departmental practitioners in regional areas have access to ongoing professional development, including face to face training (recommendation 221) will also be seen as part of the attraction and retention strategies for regional staff.</p>		
223	Ensure that every child in care, or who enters care, and who is potentially eligible, applies to participate in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). For children already in care, this must occur by 31 March 2017.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>Work is underway to assess every child in care for eligibility for the NDIS scheme. This has occurred throughout 2016 and will be accelerated with the recruitment of two disability support workers with expertise in NDIS access in response to recommendation 226.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will work towards ensuring that every child in care, who is potentially eligible for NDIS, applies to participate by 31 March 2017. However, given the high number of children in care who have a disability, and the potentially high number of children in care who have not yet been assessed or diagnosed, this recommendation may not be fully achieved by 31 March 2017. The Department for Child Protection is committed to the ongoing work required to ensure all children eligible for NDIS, access services efficiently.</p> <p>Implementing this recommendation will require case workers to be trained in NDIS eligibility conditions and understand the administrative requirements of the scheme. This training will be designed and delivered by NDIS support workers, the Department for Communities and Social Inclusions and NDIS resources in partnership with the learning and development unit.</p>		

224	Develop the function in C3MS to require caseworkers to input information when a child enters care, and for those children already in care, as to their potential eligibility for NDIS. This data should be extractable for analysis.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS-related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review discussed in response to recommendation 20.</p> <p>The function to record eligibility for NDIS in C3MS will be scoped as part of the package of improvements and enhancements to C3MS identified in <i>The life they deserve</i>.</p>		
225	Determine and fund demand for specialist disability foster care placements in accordance with the available data about children in care who are eligible for NDIS.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The main form of specialist disability foster care in South Australia is specialist foster care (SFC). SFC placements are currently managed by three non-government organisations – Life Without Barriers, Key Assets and Uniting Communities.</p> <p>The majority of children in these placements have very complex needs including disabilities and serious medical conditions.</p> <p>In October 2016, the Government approved the expansion of contracts with these services, which will result in 27 additional SFC placements per year for three years with the possibility for further expansion.</p> <p>To complement this increase, work will be undertaken by the Department for Child Protection to identify NDIS-based needs of children through delivery of recommendation 223. Greater knowledge of demand for NDIS services across children in care will inform long-term planning for the future recruitment of specialist disability foster care placements.</p>		
226	Employ specialist disability workers to consult across the agency in matters involving children with disabilities.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Two additional two disability support workers with expertise in NDIS access will be recruited to the Department for Child Protection in 2017.</p> <p>These staff will be responsible for consulting with staff across the agency about matters involving children with disabilities. In addition, they will contribute to the delivery of a number of recommendations regarding NDIS implementation training and increasing the quantity and quality of eligibility assessments.</p>		

227	Train agency caseworkers to recognise and respond to the needs of children with disabilities, particularly in accessing and maximising support services offered by NDIS.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
To date, training sessions have been jointly held between the Department for Child Protection and NDIS staff for multiple metropolitan Department for Child Protection offices.		
Future training regarding the needs of children with disabilities, with a focus on understanding and accessing support services offered by NDIS will be provided by the additional specialist disability workers identified in recommendation 226 and NDIS staff where appropriate.		
228	Ensure agency caseworkers, when participating in NDIS planning, prioritise the use of the Alternative Care Therapeutic Team program when appropriate to meet the therapeutic needs of a child in care.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
Information regarding when and how to access the Alternative Care Therapeutic Team (ACTT) program delivered by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion will be included in NDIS and disability related training identified in recommendation 227.		
In addition, important information about the ACTT program will be included in guidance documentation and procedures accessed by Department for Child Protection case workers.		
229	Develop clear guidelines on the role of home-based carers in planning and decision making in NDIS for children in their care.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
Information about planning and decision making for children in care with disabilities, the NDIS and the role of carers is publically available in the recently released the <i>Who Can Say OK?</i> resource. This resource provides information on who can make what decisions about children in care.		
<i>Who Can Say OK?</i> states the following about NDIS decision making:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Families SA case worker is the parental representative and has decision-making authority, and must take the lead in NDIS registration, planning and review processes.• To ensure the best outcomes for the child, the registration, planning and review process should include the carer and child, where appropriate. The outcomes of the NDIS plan, such as taking the child to appointments and assessment activities will, in many cases, be actioned by the carer.		
The <i>Who Can Say Okay?</i> booklet is available online at www.sa.gov.au/topics/community-support/foster-care/support-and-services/resources-and-fact-sheets		

230	Require child and family assessment and referral network members to provide support for families who are caring for children with disabilities, to enable them to engage with NDIS.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>The design and role of child and family assessment and referral networks (CFARN) is currently being considered by the South Australian Government in the context of the whole system reform to child protection in South Australia. This will be informed by thorough assessment of three CFARN pilots across the metropolitan area discussed further in the response to recommendation 51.</p> <p>Referral options and pathways to enable families caring for children with disabilities to engage with NDIS will be considered and included in pilots and their evaluation.</p>		
231	Require that the cultural background of children coming into contact with the child protection system be recorded on C3MS, including in the ‘life domains’ area, for all children in care who have a culturally and linguistically diverse background.	Accepted in principle
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.</p> <p>All C3MS related recommendations and their full acceptance are subject to the outcome of the C3MS review discussed in response to recommendation 20. This is why this recommendation is accepted in principle.</p> <p>The recording of a child’s cultural background is possible in two areas of C3MS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• intake report – on receipt of a notification about a child• life domains – demographic and planning information about a child’s life. <p>As part of the package of work to deliver enhancements to C3MS based on recommendations of <i>The life they deserve</i>, the recording of a child’s cultural background will be made mandatory in each area. Additional work will also be undertaken to ensure case workers seek accurate and relevant information about a child’s cultural background.</p> <p>In addition, training in the use of C3MS will be updated to reflect this mandatory requirement and the changes will be communicated to all staff.</p>		

232	Analyse data collected regarding the cultural background of children coming into contact with the child protection system to determine how to best respond to children at risk in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.	Accepted
		Phase 2
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. Data regarding the cultural background, other demographic information and the specific needs of children can currently be extracted from C3MS for analysis. Significant improvements are required in the collection and recording of cultural data in C3MS. This would result in the number of children who have an accurate cultural background identified in C3MS increasing and reports being more reliable. Enhancements to C3MS and work undertaken in response to recommendation 231 will increase the quality of information collected. Once recommendation 231 is implemented, more accurate reports regarding cultural background will be extracted.	
233	Undertake a qualitative review of the capacity of the agency's Multicultural Community Engagement Team (MCET).	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. The Department for Child Protection is currently developing a terms of reference for a review of the capacity and role of the MCET. Consideration will be given to whether this qualitative review is best delivered externally or internally to the department.	
234	Evaluate the effectiveness of specialist MCET staff working together with front-line practitioners on child protection cases and assess the value of collocating MCET staff in the agency's offices.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the specialist Multicultural Community Engagement Team (MCET) staff working together with front-line practitioners on child protection cases will be considered as part of the MCET review undertaken in response to recommendation 233. The review will include the requirement to determine the most appropriate location of MCET staff, and the most appropriate place for MCET in the organisational structure.	

235	Assist staff and carers who work with children in care who have a culturally and linguistically diverse background to achieve culturally informed best practice through the development of practice guides.	Accepted
		Phase 2
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection already has a number of training programs and supports in place, or under development to assist staff to achieve culturally informed best practice, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• learning needs for Aboriginal and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) children in induction training for staff• additional supports provided to staff across the Hubs and offices through workplace learning• a cultural competency package for the department being developed by the Multicultural Community Engagement Team (MECT) and Aboriginal Services, to be completed by mid-2017• foster carer assessments measuring competency to care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or culturally and linguistically diverse children, as well as mandatory induction training for foster care applicants on maintaining cultural connections• the Aboriginal Cultural Identity Support Tool (ACIST), a recent initiative to promote a collaborative approach by carers, caseworkers, family (birth, extended and kin), community members and community organisations to develop a comprehensive and robust plan to support the child's identity and connection to community, country and Culture. <p>In addition to this carers will be provided information on the need for a 'cultural maintenance plan' (recommendation 236) for the child in their care and inform them the department staff have a responsibility to develop, review and monitor these plans.</p> <p>However, the South Australian Government recognises that there is still more it can do to assist staff and carers to achieve culturally informed best practice. Consideration will be given to developing further practice guidelines for use by Department for Child Protection staff.</p>		

236	Ensure that every child in care with a culturally and linguistically diverse background has a comprehensive cultural maintenance plan that is regularly reviewed, having regard to the child’s age and placement circumstances.	Accepted
		Phase 1
	STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The Department for Child Protection will develop culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) cultural maintenance policies, practice guidelines and processes to support appropriate placements of children from CALD backgrounds and assist social worker's practise in adhering to this recommendation’s strategic directions and commitment to maintain the cultural identity of the child.</p> <p>The department is currently developing a CALD cultural maintenance support tool, which will be a stand-alone document mandatory for Department for Child Protection staff to complete for children who have been identified as belonging to CALD families.</p> <p>The tool will capture pertinent information with regards to the young person’s cultural, religious backgrounds and the interface with the local circumstances. In addition, the tool will ensure the carers are supported to take training in cultural competency and acknowledging the child’s cultural identity or connections.</p> <p>After a successful implementation in trial sites, the department will also soon implement the Aboriginal Cultural Identity Support Tool (ACIST) as a mandatory tool to be utilised in case planning for Aboriginal children and is also being embedded into day to day practice by its incorporation into practice guides, C3MS, policy/strategy documents, workplace learning and staff induction.</p> <p>Mechanisms are being developed to monitor and evaluate the use and incorporation of ACIST into case planning and its effectiveness to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children connected to family, community, country and Culture.</p>	

237	Identify key performance indicators on the cultural competency of the agency's workforce, and regularly review the effect of these recommendations on that competency.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.		
The Department for Child Protection will develop a reporting and monitoring framework that has activity specific information for each site in relation to Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and young people.		
The department recently implemented the process of an Aboriginal Impact Statement. This will ensure policies, procedures, processes, reforms and initiatives include Aboriginal consultation and that the impacts on Aboriginal business have been considered before being submitted to executive for approval.		
The department's Growing our Own Aboriginal Recruitment and Retention strategy has key performance indicators that relate to the cultural competency of the department's workforce, (similar information is required for (CALD) children) they include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• staff uptake of cultural sensitivity and respect training within 6 months of commencing employment• percentage of non-Aboriginal operations staff reporting capacity to confidently engage with and work with Aboriginal clients and families.		

238	<p>Enact a stand-alone legislative instrument to regulate the screening of individuals engaged in child-related work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. declares that the paramount consideration in screening assessment must be the best interests of children, having regard to their safety and protection b. invests powers in only one authorised government screening unit which is charged with maintaining a public register of all clearances and their expiration dates c. empowers the screening authority to take into account in its assessments criminal offence and child protection history, professional misconduct or disciplinary proceedings, and deregistration as a foster parent or other type of carer under the Family and Community Services Act 1972 d. provides a clear definition of child-related work, including the meaning of incidental or usual contact e. declares that the outcome of a screening assessment will be limited to either a clearance or a refusal and that all applications, even if withdrawn, will be assessed f. requires individuals to seek and maintain a personal clearance, valid for a period of up to five years, through a card or unique electronic identifier system, which has portability across roles and organisations in the state; and to notify the screening authority of relevant changes in their offence, conduct or child protection circumstances g. requires employers to ensure that all relevant personnel in their organisations, at all times, hold current clearances h. precludes exemptions from screening requirements for— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. registered teachers ii. applicants waiting on screening outcome decisions iii. those working or volunteering with children who are in care iv. those who have been refused a WWCC i. details offences for individuals and organisations who fail to comply with the provisions of the legislation, including engagement in or for child-related work without a clearance, and dishonesty in the application process j. permits appeals from decisions of the screening authority to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal or other independent body. 	Accepted
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 21 October 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation is largely achieved through the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i>, which was passed by the Parliament in November 2016 and cannot be enacted until regulations have been developed, publically consulted upon and finalised, and a second bill is passed making transitional arrangements and consequential amendments.</p> <p>The new legislation once enacted will implement a new regime of working with children checks for South Australia, in line with the recommendations of the South Australian Royal Commission and a number of recommendations of the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutions Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.</p> <p>The changes create a stronger legislative scheme, ensuring that a person who is assessed as being of high risk to the safety of children is prohibited from working or volunteering with them, and that it is an offence to allow this to occur. It will also bring South Australia more in line with other states and territories, enabling progress towards a nationally consistent scheme.</p> <p>Part H (iii) of recommendation 238, will be partially implemented through regulations, to sit under the new legislation. The government is keen to make sure we get the balance right between protecting children in care, with the rights of those children to privacy.</p>	Completed

239	Establish a real-time monitoring system which ensures that changes in screened individuals' circumstances are communicated to the screening authority, that clearances are reviewed, and that changes are reflected in the register, and communicated to employers.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS		
<p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 21 October 2016.</p> <p>The <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> provides for continuous monitoring, whereby every person who holds a working with children check is continuously monitored for any new relevant south Australian criminal history, child protection and care concern information to ensure that the screening clearance remains current. Through this process, data will be 'washed' daily, and relevant information provided through the screening unit systems for a re-assessment of the 'working with children' check.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring will deliver real reform in response to recommendations by both the South Australian Royal Commission and the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring will start from July 2017.</p>		

240	<p>Charge the screening authority with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ensuring that it has access to forensic expertise in child protection and behavioural indicators of risk b. developing a consolidated set of standards, matrices, and weighting guidelines for use in screening assessments, that include substantiated and unsubstantiated criminal, child protection and disciplinary matters, and ensuring that assessors are appropriately trained in their application c. developing guidelines for ensuring that applicants are afforded appropriate procedural fairness, including circumstances in which information may be withheld from applicants d. developing and promulgating timeline benchmarks for screening outcomes, and procedures for informing applicants whose clearances may fall outside benchmarked times e. developing information sharing protocols with interstate screening units. 	Accepted
		Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 21 October 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation is largely achieved through the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i>, which was passed by the Parliament in November 2016 and cannot be enacted until regulations have been developed, publically consulted upon and finalised, and a second bill is passed making transitional arrangements and consequential amendments.</p> <p>The supporting regulations and guidelines under this legislation will spell out how a working with children check is undertaken, how information is assessed and the weight given to different information. Section 4 of the new legislation states that guidelines must be published in relation to the procedures, standards, weightings, assessment criteria and processing benchmarks.</p> <p>In addition to the legislative changes, the screening unit, located within the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, has access to a forensic psychologist through the Department's Youth Justice Division. The unit also utilises the forensic expertise existing within the statutory department.</p> <p>The screening unit also publishes performance data on its website: http://screening.dcsi.sa.gov.au/news/performance</p> <p>The South Australian government accepts part E of this recommendation, and will continue to work with other states and territories, via the appropriate intergovernmental forums, to facilitate the development of information sharing protocols between screening units in other states.</p>		

241	Develop an independent mechanism and evaluation process for reviewing the performance of the screening authority.	Accepted
		Completed
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 21 October 2017.</p> <p>This recommendation is largely achieved through the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i>, which was passed by the Parliament in November 2016 and cannot be enacted until regulations have been developed, publically consulted upon and finalised, and a second bill is passed making transitional arrangements and consequential amendments. A provision has been included in the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> that requires the minister to cause an independent review to be conducted at least once every five years. The first review should therefore occur prior to 2023.</p> <p>Under the new legislation, this review must be conducted by a person or body independent from the minister and the screening unit, and must be laid before both Houses of Parliament.</p>		
242	Amend the <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> :	Accepted
	<p>a. to permit and, in appropriate cases, require the sharing of information between prescribed government and non-government agencies that have responsibilities for the health, safety or wellbeing of children where it would promote those issues</p> <p>b. to require prescribed government and non- government agencies to take reasonable steps to coordinate decision making and the delivery of services for children.</p>	Phase 1
<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Currently, government and non-government organisations share information pertaining to the safety and protection of children in accordance with the <i>Information Sharing Guidelines (ISG)</i>. Relevant government and non-government organisations also follow the <i>Interagency Code of Practice: Investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect</i> (July 2016) (ICP).</p> <p>The Royal Commission identified a perceived reluctance to share information, based on the confidentiality requirements in section 58 of the Children's Protection Act, even where this is permitted under the ISG or ICP.</p> <p>In August 2016, the South Australian Government introduced into Parliament the Public Sector (Data Sharing) Bill 2016. Further amendments were introduced on 20 September 2016. This Bill will create a more open data sharing environment between government agencies and non-government agencies, local councils, and the Australian Government, which will realise recommendation 242.</p> <p>Further, provisions in the Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 also give effect to this recommendation.</p>		

243	Require senior leaders from government and non-government agencies that have responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of children to meet at least quarterly to identify strategic measures to promote inter- agency collaboration and information sharing.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The chief executive, Department for Child Protection will chair quarterly discussions to identify strategic opportunities to promote inter-agency collaboration and information sharing across all major government agencies. This will commence from 2017.</p> <p>Meetings will include Senior Management Council members with responsibilities for health, education, justice, police and housing, as well as non-government representatives. The Child and Family Wellbeing Association (CAFWA) and the Human services Partnership Forum will be invited to nominate the non-government representatives best placed to attend these meetings.</p>		
244	Review procedures and employment arrangements so that chief executives of government agencies with responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of children have a provision included in their performance agreements that obliges them to ensure inter-agency collaboration in child protection matters, and measure that performance.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 12 August 2016.</p> <p>The Office for the Public Sector was charged with delivering this recommendation through the development of the 2016-2017 chief executive performance agreements.</p> <p>Chief executive performance agreements for 2016-2017 state that chief executives of agencies responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of children need to “demonstrate interagency collaboration in child protection matters”.</p>		

245	Establish the statutory office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People and provide the Commissioner with the functions and powers referred to in this report.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p><i>The Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 (SA)</i> ('the Act') establishes the office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, continues the Guardian for Children and Young People and the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, and creates the Child Development Council. The Act provides the commissioner with the functions and powers set out in the Report, except that the Commissioner is required to consult with the minister before publishing information contained in a report made under Part 2 of the Act.</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p> <p>An expression of interest for the position of Commissioner for Children and Young People was advertised on 12 November 2016 with applications closing on 9 December 2016. A four-week period has been set to enable time for promotion of the role. Interviews are planned to occur the week beginning Monday 9 January 2017.</p> <p>The selection process will involve the voices of children, with the Council for the Care of Children to establish a children's panel.</p>	
246	Consolidate the legislation for the Children's Commissioner, the Guardian for Children and Young People (GCYP), the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee (CDSIRC) and the Child Development Council in a single Act of Parliament.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p><i>The Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 (SA)</i> ('the Act') consolidates the provisions governing these various oversight and advocacy bodies. The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>	
247	Empower GCYP and CDSIRC to refer matters to the Children's Commissioner, where they are of the view that escalation through processes available to the Children's Commissioner is appropriate.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation will be implemented by section 35 of the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 (SA)</i>. The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>	

248	Empower the Children's Commissioner to exercise its statutory powers and functions in relation to such matters, including employing the regime to monitor government responses to recommendations, and escalate the matter to the minister and Parliament where necessary, at his or her sole discretion.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016. This recommendation will be implemented by sections 12 to 17, and section 39, of the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ("the Act"). The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.		
249	Collocate the Children's Commissioner, GCYP, CDSIRC and the Child Development Committee, and make arrangements for the sharing of some administrative functions.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle. There is great value in having close working relationships between the Children's Commissioner, Guardian for Children Young People, Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee (CDSIRC) and the Child Development Committee. The Guardian, CDSIRC and the Council for the Care of Children were co-located and this was considered a constructive arrangement that enhanced the work of each group. Therefore the State Government is currently investigating options for co-location of the four oversight and advocacy bodies identified in this recommendation. The government will work with the oversight and advocacy bodies to determine appropriate and efficient arrangements for the sharing of administrative functions.		
250	Amend legislation to permit, but not require, GCYP, CDSIRC and the Children's Commissioner to share de-identified data.	Accepted
		Completed
STATUS The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016. This recommendation will be implemented by section 56 of the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ("the Act") and its operation with the <i>Public Sector (Data Sharing) Act 2016</i> (SA). The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.		

251	Amend legislation to empower the Children's Commissioner or GCYP to make complaints to the Ombudsman and HCSCC on behalf of a child.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation will be implemented by sections 37 and 38 of the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ('the Act').</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>	
252	Amend the <i>Ombudsman Act 1972</i> (SA) to ensure that complaints about the actions of government agencies, and other agencies acting under contract to the government, concerning child protection services, find principal jurisdiction with the Ombudsman, and not the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner, where the complaint is about an administrative act.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation will be implemented by Parts 4 and 5 in Schedule 1 to the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ("the Act").</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>	
253	Amend the <i>Ombudsman Act 1972</i> to permit the Ombudsman to exercise the jurisdiction of Health Care and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC) in appropriate cases.	Accepted
		Completed
	<p>STATUS</p> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 30 August 2016.</p> <p>This recommendation will be implemented by clause 9 in Schedule 1 to the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) (the Act), which amends section 13 of the <i>Ombudsman Act 1972</i> to provide that the Ombudsman, when investigating a 'prescribed child protection complaint', has any additional powers that the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner would have under the <i>Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004</i> if the commissioner was investigating such a complaint under that Act.</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>	

254	Develop an administrative arrangement between the Ombudsman and HCSCC to determine matters in which the Ombudsman would exercise dual jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, child protection complaints.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation is related to recommendation 252, which will be implemented by Parts 4 and 5 of Schedule 1 to the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ("the Act").</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p> <p>The government has consulted with the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner and the Ombudsman who will discuss whether there are particular classes of complaint over which the Ombudsman has 'dual jurisdiction'. It is envisaged that these classes of complaint could be identified in an administrative arrangement as complaints which the commissioner would investigate and not refer to the Ombudsman.</p>		
255	Develop the capacity of the Ombudsman's Office to respond specifically to child protection complaints.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>This recommendation is related to recommendation 252 which will be implemented by Parts 4 and 5 in Schedule 1 to the <i>Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016</i> (SA) ("the Act").</p> <p>The provisions set out in Parts 4 and 5 will confer upon the Ombudsman jurisdiction to investigate a 'prescribed child protection complaint' and will provide that the commissioner will refer such complaints to the Ombudsman, for the Ombudsman to investigate, except where they are complaints of a type that have been identified in an administrative agreement as complaints that will be investigated by the Commissioner rather than by the Ombudsman.</p> <p>The Act was passed by Parliament on 19 October 2016.</p>		
256	Develop a package of information regarding making complaints about child protection matters, including information and complaint forms suitable for children and young people.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Once the Commissioner for Children and Young People commences in their role, the South Australian Government will request the Commissioner, the Ombudsman and the Health and Community Services Complaints Commission collaborate to develop a package of information regarding making complaints about child protection matters.</p> <p>Forms and guides will be developed that are child friendly, and encourage children to voice issues and raise complaints with the appropriate complaints and advocacy bodies.</p>		

257	Establish an across-government steering committee to monitor and oversee the implementation of recommendations. Membership of the committee should include representation by senior executives from relevant government agencies and include at least one independent member external to the South Australian Government. The committee should report directly to the Minister for Child Protection Reform as Chair of the Child Protection Reform Cabinet Committee.	Accepted
		Phase 1
<h2>STATUS</h2> <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p>An across-government steering committee was established to monitor the development and implementation of the government response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission.</p> <p>The steering committee was chaired by the chief executive, Attorney-General's Department, who reports directly to the Minister for Child Protection Reform as Chair of the Child Protection Reform Cabinet Committee.</p> <p>This committee consisted almost entirely of senior government executives. However, three external members have been invited at the request of Cabinet to ensure the voices of children, the Aboriginal community and academics are included in discussions.</p> <p>Announced as part of this response, the steering committee has been replaced with a Child Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Panel. The advisory panel will be the key mechanism for government to form a genuine partnership with the broader community to tackle child protection reform in the future.</p> <p>The Panel's terms of reference are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advise on reform implementation• monitor and advise the system-level impact of government reforms• track aggregated indicators of progress towards improved outcomes for children and families within the child protection system• promote shared leadership, commitment and new ways of working together to create a better child protection system for South Australia.		

258	Establish a response and implementation team consisting of staff with expertise in child protection, policy, data analysis, stakeholder engagement and legislative development.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepted this recommendation on 8 August 2016.</p> <p>\$1.0 million was provided in 2016-17 through the 2016-17 State Budget to establish a Response unit within the Attorney-General's Department. This unit was established as a time-limited structure to analyse the Royal Commission's recommendations and provide advice to Cabinet on how best to respond. The staff within the unit had skills across child protection, policy, stakeholder engagement and legislative development.</p> <p>Through the establishment of the new Department for Child Protection, an implementation team has been established to drive the implementation of <i>A fresh start</i>. This team will draw on the child protection, policy, data analysis, stakeholder engagement and legislation development skills across the new agency and across government to deliver these reforms as a whole-of-government priority.</p>		
259	Ensure the implementation of recommendations within the newly formed child protection department is adequately managed with high- level change agents and appropriately qualified and skilled child protection staff.	Accepted
		Phase 1
STATUS <p>The South Australian Government accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>As part of the creation of the new Department for Child Protection, a new Reform Implementation Team has been established.</p> <p>Through targeted recruitment of new staff and capacity building of existing staff within the agency, the department will ensure that the implementation team has an appropriate mix of staff experienced in change management and child protection work.</p>		



