

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to Minister for Children and Families.

Child Protection Workers and other Staff Recruitment

1. How much money has been spent on the duplication of Government resources in the separation of Child Protection from the Department of Health and Families (the previous Department)?

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has followed the Cabinet direction to share corporate services with the Department of Health (DoH) and has not duplicated resources.

2. What has been the total cost of separating Child Protection from the Department of Children & Families and what exactly were the costs involved?

Child Protection is part of the Department of Children and Families.

3. How many new positions have been established in the new Department of Children & Families since 1 January 2011 and how many of these have no direct service delivery role?

197 new positions have been created; 38 are service support roles.

4. How many new “personal assistant” or “executive officer” or “executive assistant” positions have been created in the new Department of Children & Families since the 1 January 2011?

Four positions of this type have been created (this is comprised of 3 x Executive Officers & 1 x Personal Assistant).

5. What has been the average cost of recruiting a child protection worker from overseas?

The average cost is approximately \$15,000. This varies depending on the number of dependants and the country of origin.

6. How many child protection workers have been recruited from overseas in total in the past 12 months?

45 child protection workers have been recruited from overseas.

7. What are the terms of employment Child Protection workers recruited from overseas are generally placed on, including length and nature of the employment contract?

Generally overseas recruits are offered permanent employment and sponsorship via the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS). The conditions of the RSMS visa require the employee to remain employed by the sponsoring Department for a minimum of 2 years (some exceptions apply). The approval of the RSMS visa is a lengthy process, so temporary sponsorship & employment contracts are offered as an interim measure while waiting for the permanent RSMS visa to be approved.

8. What is the process used to orientate and welcome overseas recruits to the Northern Territory and the Department of Children & Families? What can they expect when they arrive in Australia from the Department of Children & Families?

Specific tailored orientation programs are being provided to overseas recruits which include an overview and context of Department of Children and Families and the Northern Territory, the legislative framework, mandatory reporting obligations, legislated OH&S information, Departmental policies and processes with a focus on culturally safe practice. Orientation has also included an indigenous cultural tour and 4WD driving course

All new frontline staff are also required to undertake core training.

A range of specialist training is also freely available to all new staff both in the corporate/management fields and in specialisations within child protection.

All new staff are required to complete the DCF induction manual to further orientate themselves into DCF and their workplace.