



PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC16-065273

17 AUG 2016

Mr John Paterson
Chief Executive Officer
Aboriginal Peak Organisation Northern Territory
C/O brionee.noonan@amsant.org.au

Dear Mr Paterson

Thank you for your letter dated 26 July 2016 regarding the Royal Commission into Child Protection and Youth Detention Systems in the Northern Territory.

Australians across the country were shocked and appalled by the images. The Government responded quickly and established the Royal Commission into the Child Protection and Youth Detention Systems of the Northern Territory.

The Royal Commission has been established in a focused way to enable the swift inquiry into the failings in the child protection and youth detention systems of the Government of the Northern Territory.

Thank you for your suggestions on how the inquiry should be conducted and its scope.

The Royal Commission's terms of reference reflect input from a wide range of groups. The Government has been speaking with Indigenous leaders, members of the community and justice advocates about the establishment of the Commission. I believe we have hit the right balance between a very narrow set of terms of reference and ones that are so wide ranging that the inquiry could become unwieldy.

The Government acknowledges the importance of having an Indigenous voice on the Commission given the high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Northern Territory involved in the child protection and juvenile detention systems.

As you are aware, the Royal Commission will be conducted by the Honourable Margaret White AO, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, and Mr Mick Gooda, who has recently served as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Social Justice Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The Royal Commission is independent from both the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments and is responsible for establishing its own processes. Any enquiries relating to the Royal Commission can be directed to the Office of the Royal Commission (call: 1800 604 604 between 9.00am – 5.30pm AEST or email: ChildDetentioninNT@ag.gov.au)

I have copied this response to the Attorney-General, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC and the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion.

Yours sincerely



MALCOLM TURNBULL