



## Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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## Alice Springs hearings and forward hearing schedule

### Forward hearing schedule

Hearings of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory resume on Monday 29 May in Alice Springs, with a focus on child protection systems.

Child protection is a very important issue for many in the Northern Territory and it is critical that all parties have sufficient opportunity to participate fully in the subsequent hearings in Darwin. As a result the forward hearing schedule has been amended.

After the conclusion of the Alice Springs hearings on Friday June 2, the hearings will adjourn and then recommence from Monday, June 19 in Darwin.

### Alice Springs hearings from May 29

Next week's hearings in Alice Springs focus on child protection systems.

The Commission expects to hear personal stories from parents, children and families who have had contact with child welfare services, together with sworn evidence from professionals, community organisations, former NT ministers and departmental officials and subject matter experts.

People affected by child protection processes will be heard in the following ways:

- A series of personal stories – including recordings, video or in person – will be presented on an informal basis to the hearings and will not be taken as evidence or tendered.
- A formal appearance in court – via closed or open hearings – to be tendered as evidence.

The hearings are set down for Alice Springs at the Convention Centre from 29 May 2017.

Reflecting the diverse approaches taken by the Commission to gathering information, private meetings with case workers, residential care workers and foster carers are also set down for Alice Springs together with a public forum.

This builds on the work already undertaken since the Commission's inception in exploring the challenges, strengths and weaknesses of child protection systems in the Northern Territory. This has included direct engagement with communities and a wide-ranging group of relevant stakeholders, research and submission processes.

**Note:** It is expected there will be a significant amount of material that will only be accessible on an embargoed basis to those journalists who have pre-registered. Email [media@royalcommission.gov.au](mailto:media@royalcommission.gov.au) to enquire about registration.

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