



Child custody inquiry public hearings Launceston, Tasmania, Friday 29 August

The House of Representatives Family and Community Affairs Committee's inquiry into child custody arrangements will hold its third public hearing this Friday, 29 August, in Launceston.

The hearing will incorporate an hour for community statements.

The Launceston hearing details are:

Date: Friday 29 August 2003
Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm
Venue: Conference Centre
Doherty's Launceston International Hotel
29 Cameron Street
Launceston, Tasmania

10.00 am	Relationships Australia (Tasmania)
10.25 am	Maggie Walter, Lecturer, University of Tasmania
10.50 am	Tasmanian Men's Health & Wellbeing Association Inc
11.15am	Two individuals
12noon–1pm	Community statements

Note: The hearing will be followed by about an hour for Community statements each of about 3 minutes duration. All who would like to speak are invited to attend. Participants will be chosen on the day. The 3 minute time limit should be adhered to so the committee can hear from as many people as possible within the hour.

Please note that due to the nature of the inquiry the committee may need to move into an in camera (confidential) hearing for some witnesses and the program could be subject to change.

The forthcoming dates and locations for hearings are:

- Monday 1 September: Wollongong, NSW, and Blacktown (western Sydney)

The Committee will then hold hearings in Queensland. Further detail on all these hearings will be issued closer to the events. Public hearings will be held in every State and Territory.

More than 1500 submissions have been received by the inquiry so far. This is a record for an inquiry by this Committee, and amongst the highest ever for a House of Representatives Committee.

For media comment from the Chair, please contact:

Mrs Kay Hull, MP (Chair), via tel: (02) 6921 4600 or 0428 211 591

For further details on the inquiry, including background documentation,
contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4566 or visit the inquiry website at
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fca/childcustody/

CHILD CUSTODY INQUIRY TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee is to investigate and make recommendations for action on the following matters:

- (a) given that the best interests of the child are the paramount consideration:
 - (i) what other factors should be taken into account in deciding the respective time each parent should spend with their children post separation, in particular whether there should be a presumption that children will spend equal time with each parent and, if so, in what circumstances such a presumption could be rebutted; and
 - (ii) in what circumstances a court should order that children of separated parents have contact with other persons, including their grandparents.
- (b) whether the existing child support formula works fairly for both parents in relation to their care of, and contact with, their children.
- (c) with the Committee to report to the Parliament by 31 December 2003.

The Committee has been asked to have regard to the Government's recent response to the report of the Family Law Pathways Advisory Group. A link to this report is available on the inquiry website.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Chairman Mrs Kay Hull MP

Members Hon Alan Cadman MP
 Ms Trish Draper MP
 Mr Peter Dutton MP
 Ms Jennie George MP
 Mrs Julia Irwin MP

Mr Chris Pearce MP
Hon Roger Price MP
Mr Harry Quick MP
Mr Cameron Thompson MP