

Public Service Association of New South Wales

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In reply please quote: *XT:ljm: A14/1257*

26 August, 2015

The Hon. Brad Hazzard, MP  
Minister for Family & Community Services,  
and Minister for Social Housing  
PO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister Hazzard,

**Re: Inquiry into Community Services privatisation of Out of Home Care**

I refer to the PSA meeting on June 4th 2015 with the Minister and senior representatives of the Department of FACS. The PSA raised concerns about the increasing privatisation of Out of Home Care (OOHC) to non-government organisations that has seen a shift in FACS resources and capacity away from working with children in OOHC. The PSA requested the Minister establish an independent inquiry to examine the privatisation of Out of Home Care.

The PSA noted that it is over 3 years since the outsourcing of Out of Home Care began. There are increasing problems associated with the transition, including acute shortages of placements, increased incidents of abuse in care, inappropriate placements, high numbers of Aboriginal children placed in non-Aboriginal placements, serious concerns relating to the quality of services provided, concerns over NGO recruitment practices and assessment of new carers, reduced financial support for carers and failure to improve outcomes for children. There are now fewer OOHC caseworkers working directly with children and foster carers. The PSA believes an independent inquiry is necessary to examine these issues.

The PSA further requests consultation on any review that the Department has had on these issues, including any review of NGOs contracts and the contractual basis for reporting on NGO outcomes.

Please contact Steve Turner, Assistant General Secretary on 9220 0982 to arrange a meeting or to discuss any of these matters.

Yours faithfully,

  
Steve Turner  
A/General Secretary

cc. Michael Coutts-Trotter, Secretary, Dept. of Family and Community Services