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## **The horrors at Wundarra expose privatised risk to kids in care**

The Public Service Association (PSA) has renewed its call for a moratorium on the privatisation of child protection services as well as a public inquiry following reports of the horrific events at Wundarra Services at Coffs Harbour which provides out of home care for children with extremely complex needs.

Wundarra is a privately run residential care facility for Aboriginal children and young people aged between 12 and 18 years who are unable to live with their families.

It is funded by public money by the State Government yet is run by private providers out of sight of experienced Government workers.

In August 2015, following the death of a young boy in non-Government care, the PSA wrote to the Minister for Family and Community Services Brad Hazzard calling for an inquiry into the Government's outsourcing of Out of Home Care.

The Minister saw no need for such an investigation.

The events at Wundarra have however tragically demonstrated why a major inquiry is urgently needed.

"This is exactly the type of scenario that the PSA and its members have been fearing and is the worst possible outcome of privatisation," said PSA Assistant General Secretary, Steve Turner.

"Something is obviously seriously wrong when the local police record more than 500 incident from Wundarra including three alleged rapes and almost 30 assaults."

"It is only in the light of the recent horrific media reports that the Minister has now decided to implement full criminal checks on all staff working with vulnerable children in non-Government care."

"The PSA has been warning for some time about this lack of Government oversight and proper regulation in the non-Government sector."

"In fact, it has been the union's great overarching concern not just in relation to the privatised care of vulnerable kids but the out sourcing of public services generally to the private sector."

"From 2012, approximately 65% of the Department's Out Of Home Care responsibilities have been transferred to non-Government services, including residential care."

"Given the reported events at Wundarra, the State Government must urgently move to protect vulnerable children with an immediate moratorium on the privatisation of Out of Home Care along with the establishment of a Royal Commission," said Steve Turner.