



HOUSE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

INQUIRY INTO CHILD CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 12 September 2003

Chair: Mrs Kay Hull, MP
Deputy: Mrs Julia Irwin, MP

Key departments and agencies at child custody inquiry: Canberra public hearing, Monday 15 September

The House of Representatives Family and Community Affairs Committee's inquiry into child custody arrangements will hold a public hearing in **Canberra** this **Monday, 15 September**.

Appearing will be key Commonwealth departments and agencies involved with child custody laws and policies. They are the Attorney General's Department and the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS), which includes the Child Support Agency.

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday 15 September: 8.30am – 12.30pm

Venue: House of Representatives Committee Room 2R2

Program

8.30am Attorney General's Department

10.30am Department of Family and Community Services & Child Support Agency

FUTURE HEARINGS: Public hearings will be held in every State and Territory (hearings have already been held in Geelong, Melbourne, Launceston, Wollongong, western Sydney, the Gold Coast, Brisbane and Cairns). The next hearings will be in **Adelaide** (Wednesday 24 September), **Darwin** (Thursday 25 September) and **Perth** (Friday 26 September). Further details on each of these will be issued closer to the events.

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, 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

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

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