

Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014

Meeting the needs of children and young people
in out-of-home care



Transition Program Office



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SECTION 1 Background

Since 1 March 2012, Transition Program Office partners – Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat (AbSec), Association of Children’s Welfare Agencies (ACWA) and Community Services, Department of Family & Community Services – have worked together to change how out-of-home care services are delivered in NSW.

The Transition Program Office has coordinated the development and implementation of governance mechanisms, policies, guidelines, systems and processes to drive the transition of out-of-home care service provision to the non-government sector and improve out-of-home care service delivery for children and young people in NSW.

As at 30 June 2013, regional transition targets for 2012-2013 were exceeded, with 2,335 of 11,439 children and young people in statutory foster and relative/kin care now case managed by non-government service providers.

Since its inception in 2011, the transition of out-of-home care service provision to the non-government sector has been guided by two key documents:

1. *Out-of-Home Care Transition Plan Stage 1 – The ‘who’ and the ‘when’* (Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)-endorsed in October 2011)
2. *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework* (MAG-endorsed in December 2011).
 - The *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework* (2011) identified six key strategies and provided a detailed outline of the actions required under each strategy to facilitate transition.
 - The *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* (see page 6-7) was developed by the Transition Program Office and endorsed by the MAG in August 2013. The Strategic Plan provides the overarching strategic framework that informs planning for both the Transition Program Office and Regional/District Implementation Groups (RIGs).
 - This *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014* identifies actions and activities the Transition Program Office will undertake in 2013/2014 to meet the outcomes and aims outlined within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*.

What has informed the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*?

A number of key documents have informed this *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*:

- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework* (2011)
- KPMG review
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014* survey
- Service sector structure and policy changes
- out-of-home care forums
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Report Card – June 2013*
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*.

The strategies and actions outlined in the *Transition Implementation Framework* (2011) have been revised and enhanced to facilitate the transition of children and young people in out-of-home care to non-government organisations and support building the capacity of the non-government sector.

See Appendix A for further detail.

Purpose of this document

The aim of this *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014* is to:

- outline actions under the four strategies identified within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* to enable the Transition Program Office to facilitate the transition of service delivery to the non-government sector in its second stage
- provide a detailed outline of responsibilities of the Transition Program Office and Community Services directorates for actioning and reporting against
- outline current Transition Program Office partner roles and responsibilities
- outline current governance mechanisms that support the transition of out-of-home care service provision
- outline strategies to further develop governance mechanisms for a sustainable non-government sector beyond June 2014.

SECTION 2 Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategy

Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014

OUR VISION: Build a vibrant, responsive and sustainable non-government out-of-home care sector for children, young people and their families.

Outcomes

- All children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are placed and case managed by the non-government sector
- All Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are placed with Aboriginal carers
- Placements of all Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are supported by Aboriginal agencies
- Practice is improved to increase the number of children and young people who remain safely at home or are restored to a safe environment
- Regional transition targets met to build a sustainable out-of-home care sector

Strategies

Strategy 1

Embed governance and cultural change

Aims

- Cultural change is facilitated through the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience across the sector
- Innovative practice is communicated across the sector
- Risks are monitored and mitigated through sector wide mechanisms
- Sector partnerships are formed to facilitate strategies which meet specific and measurable outcomes and goals
- Post-transition governance mechanisms established that support a sustainable out-of-home care sector post June 2014 (post-Transition Program Office), including role of peak bodies

Strategy 2

Build service sector capacity

Aims

- Non-government sector is supported to deliver a wide range of services including family preservation, restoration, out-of-home care foster care and residential care, after care and adoption services
- Aboriginal children and young people and families have access to a wide range of non-government services including family preservation, restoration, out-of-home care foster care and residential care, and after care services
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children, young people and families have access to a wide range of non-government services including family preservation, restoration, out-of-home care foster care and residential care, and after care services

Overview

home care sector that has the capacity to achieve the best possible outcomes for

Outcome Measures

- Number and percentage of children and young people in statutory out-of-home care who are placed with and case managed by non-government agencies
- Number and percentage of Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care who are placed with Aboriginal carers
- Number and percentage of Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care whose placement is supported by Aboriginal agencies
- Number and percentage of successful family preservation interventions
- Number and percentage of successful restorations
- Progress against regional transition targets

Strategy 3

Systems and processes support collaboration and improve service delivery

Aims

- Service provision options for high-risk children, young people and families are considered collaboratively within regions prior to entering out-of-home care
- Systems and processes support placement stability and improve outcomes for children and young people
- Out-of-home care case management responsibilities of Community Services and funded service providers are communicated across the sector
- Systems and processes support the placement of Aboriginal children and young people with Aboriginal carers and are supported by Aboriginal agencies in accordance with the Aboriginal Placement Principles
- Systems and process are established to ensure that Aboriginal and CALD children and young people maintain cultural connections

Strategy 4

Recruit, retain and support carers needed for children and young people case managed by the non-government sector

Aims

- Carers currently supported by Community Services are transitioned to the non-government service providers
- Non-government agencies are able to recruit, retain and support the number of new carers required to meet the needs of children and young people entering care, including those from Aboriginal and CALD families and children and young people with disabilities or challenging behaviours

SECTION 3 Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014

Vision

The overall vision for the transition of out-of-home care service provision to the non-government sector remains as expressed in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Plan Stage 1* (2011) and reflected in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* is:

Build a vibrant, responsive, sustainable non-government out-of-home care sector that has the capacity to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Transition outcomes and outcome measures

Transition outcomes and outcome measures remain the same as outlined in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 1* (2011), with the addition of an outcome and outcome measure to reflect the importance of continued transition of children and young people to the non-government out-of-home care sector.

Transition outcomes

- All children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are placed and case managed by the non-government sector
- All Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are placed with Aboriginal carers
- Placements of all Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care are supported by Aboriginal agencies
- Innovative region/district practices increase the number of children and young people who remain safely at home or who are restored to a safe environment
- Region/district transition targets are met to build a sustainable out-of-home care sector.

Outcome measures

- Number and percentage of children and young people in statutory out-of-home care who are placed with, and case managed, by non-government agencies
- Number and percentage of Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care who are placed with Aboriginal carers
- Number and percentage of Aboriginal children and young people in statutory out-of-home care whose placement is managed by Aboriginal agencies
- Number and percentage of successful family preservation interventions
- Number and percentage of successful restorations
- Progress against region/district transition targets.

Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013 – 2014 strategies

The six strategies in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 1 (2011)* have been consolidated into four strategies in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*.

1. Embed governance and cultural change

The successful transition of out-of-home care service provision to the non-government sector requires enhancement of existing governance structures and continuing to build and maintain strong partnerships across the sector. Governance across the sector should support identification and response to risks and facilitate sharing of information and innovative practices.

2. Build service sector capacity

A vibrant, responsive and sustainable non-government out-of-home care service system is dependent on both the capacity of individual non-government service providers and the broader service system.

Service system capacity is supported by Community Services through monitoring demand and funding of agencies to deliver a wide range of out-of-home care services to children, young people and families, including foster care, residential care, restoration services and leaving care services. (Some non-government agencies are also funded to deliver adoption or family preservation services.)

Individual non-government agency capacity building and service delivery is supported by access to an experienced workforce, learning and development programs and other supports, such as shared systems and processes that enable the sector to respond to the individual needs of children and young people.

3. Implement systems and processes to support collaboration and improve service delivery

In addition to contributing to building the capacity of the out-of-home care service system, shared systems and processes are necessary to facilitate the transition of existing children and young people to the non-government sector. This also enhances case management consistency across the state and allows for the monitoring of service system demand.

4. Recruit, retain and support the carers that children and young people need within the NGO sector

Sustainability of the non-government out-of-home care sector is dependent on the recruitment, retention and support of carers. This strategy was identified within the *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2* survey, as a key priority by the majority of non-government service provider respondents, in 2013-2014.

Community Services has contracted ACWA to lead the Fostering NSW Carer Recruitment Awareness Raising Campaign until mid-2014. This includes maintaining the Fostering NSW website, referring online enquiries and operating the 1800 2 FOSTER number. Individual agencies retain responsibility for recruiting and retaining the carers they require.

Principles

As outlined in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Plan Stage 1* (2011), the work undertaken by all non-government organisations across the sector is underpinned by 10 principles, as agreed upon by stakeholders.

These principles remain central to the strategies, actions and activities outlined in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* and *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 2013-2014*.

1. Services and placements built around children's and their families' needs, with a permanency-planning approach, is at the forefront of practice.
2. Placement stability and cultural support is paramount.
3. Joined up teams work together to ensure children and families receive the earliest possible interventions and support services.
4. Children, young people and carers are supported with information they require to make informed choices about transferring.
5. Ultimately, all Aboriginal children and young people in care are cared for by Aboriginal carers, supported by Aboriginal caseworkers employed by local Aboriginal-managed agencies.
6. All Aboriginal children and young people in care are placed in a culturally appropriate setting with a strong preference for placements in Aboriginal community-controlled organisations or in non-Aboriginal agencies working in partnership with Aboriginal agencies with a view to developing capacity and independence.
7. Non-government agencies have appropriate cultural capabilities to look after Aboriginal children and young people in their care.
8. Government and non-government partnerships are based on trust and respect for each other's experience and innovative ideas.
9. Case management responsibility belongs to the agency accepting the placement as the child enters care, regardless of Children's Court proceedings, and responsibility for case management transfers with the children and young people as they move from Community Services placements to non-government placements.
10. Transition takes place according to service capacity and demand, and while some cohorts may take longer than others, success and stability is valued over expediency.

Strategy 1: Embed governance and cultural change

Aims

- Cultural change is facilitated through sharing of knowledge, skills and experience across the sector
- Innovative practice is communicated across the sector
- Risks are monitored and mitigated through sector-wide mechanisms
- Sector partnerships are formed to facilitate strategies that meet specific and measurable outcomes and goals
- Post-transition governance mechanisms established that support a sustainable sector post June 2014 (post TPO), including role of peak bodies

Indicators

- Feedback from non-government service providers on the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience, including the number of FACS staff employed under section 88A of the *Public Service Employment Management Act* (PSEMA)
- Evidence of innovative practice communicated across the sector
- Identification of items within risk mitigation mechanisms that have been actioned and resolved
- Evidence of how *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* strategies have been progressed through collaborative partnerships
- Review of sector sustainability post-2014

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
<p>TPO will complete a sector governance mechanisms options paper in consultation with key stakeholders to map governance beyond June 2014. This paper will outline a number of options for governance including identifying the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roles and responsibilities of AbSec, ACWA and Community Services (CS) • risk management mechanisms • how information will be communicated • how any identified governance bodies will engage stakeholders to participate in decision making • relationships between AbSec, ACWA and various Community Services teams involved in out-of-home care 	TPO (CS, AbSec and ACWA)	
<p>Implementation, progress reporting and case studies on temporary assignment (PSEMA Section 88A and <i>Government Sector Employment Act 2013</i> Clause 66 and leave without pay provisions) allowing FACS staff to be 'seconded' to NGOs to support and facilitate capacity building and professional development</p>	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
<p>Continue to monitor regional risk registers and escalate service sector risks to MAG</p>	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
<p>Establish stakeholder engagement group</p>	TPO(CS)	TPO (CS)

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
Monitor the impact of localisation on current governance structures, systems and processes that support transition and mitigate any identified risks and issues	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Develop evaluation parameters and initiate an evaluation for transition	TPO (CS, AbSec and ACWA)	TPO (CS, AbSec and ACWA)
Review of service system reporting	TPO (CS), SSD* (CS)	TPO (CS)
Establish mechanisms to share innovation and information across the sector	TPO (CS), PPS (CS)	TPO (CS)
Establish a carer peak body	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
Undertake service system mapping to inform future sector planning through identifying demographic factors that support a sustainable NGO OOHC service sector. Mapping will include workforce sustainability	TPO (CS, AbSec and ACWA)	TPO (CS, AbSec and ACWA)

*Service System Delivery

Strategy 2: Build service sector capacity

Aims

- Non-government sector is supported to deliver a wide range of services, including family preservation, restoration, foster care, residential care, after care and adoption
- Aboriginal children and young people and families have access to a wide range of non-government services, including family preservation, restoration, foster care, residential care and after care
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children, young people and families have access to a wide range of non-government services including family preservation, restoration, foster care, residential care and after care

Indicators

- Number and percentage of funded out-of-home care placements filled
- Number and percentage of family preservation service placements funded and filled
- Number and percentage of restoration service placements funded and filled
- Number and type of services funded to deliver specialised services to Aboriginal and CALD children and young people and families
- Number of out-of-home care adoption applications progressed (where adoption is the case plan goal)

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
Continue to establish partnerships to create new Aboriginal agencies with the aim of establishing autonomy	TPO (AbSec)	TPO (AbSec)
Support organisations to achieve and maintain accreditation	TPO (AbSec)	TPO (AbSec)
Implement statewide general and targeted foster carer recruitment campaigns	ACWA	ACWA
Facilitate development of service sector capacity and lead/facilitate sector change	ACWA	ACWA
Offer learning and development opportunities for agencies and carers to allow them to develop knowledge/skills to care for children and young people with a diverse range of needs	ACWA	ACWA
Endorse out-of-home care case management roles and responsibilities	TPO (CS), SSD* (CS)	TPO (CS)
Undertake a quality of care review	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
Determine clear casework responsibilities for Community Services and NGOs in the transfer and delivery of family preservation and restoration services	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)

*Service System Delivery

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
Continue to fund agencies to deliver a broad range of services	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
MAG* and OOHC taskforce endorsement of restoration models for Ministerial approval and implementation	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
Continue to monitor OOHC sector capacity and demand	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
Maintain pre-qualified OOHC service provider list	SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)
Monitor OOHC host districts to provide purchase plans for the year	SSD (CS)	
Build on the work and issues identified by the CALD statewide working group	TPO (CS), SSD (CS)	TPO (CS)

*Out-of-home care Ministerial Advisory Group

Strategy 3: Implement systems and processes that support collaboration and improve service delivery

Aims

- Service provision options for high-risk children and young people and their families are considered collaboratively within region/districts prior to entering care
- Systems and processes support placement stability and improved outcomes for children and young people
- Community Services and funded service provider case management responsibilities are communicated across the sector
- Systems and processes support Aboriginal children and young people being placed with Aboriginal carers and supported by Aboriginal agencies in accordance with the Aboriginal Placement Principles
- Systems and process established to ensure Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and young people maintain cultural connections

Indicators

- Endorsement and implementation of out-of-home care case management policy
- Development and/or review of shared systems and processes to be used across the sector
- Number and percentage of children and young people entering care who are placed with a non-government provider within 24 hours of entering care
- Reduction in number of placement moves experienced by children and young people
- Number and percentage of Aboriginal children and young people placed according to the *Transfer and Placement of Aboriginal Children and Young People* TPO policy paper
- Strategies developed to place CALD children and young people with carers familiar with their language and culture

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
Establish region/district service coordination panels to identify appropriate service provision options for high-risk families prior to OOHC entry	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Establish mechanisms for regular joint practice reviews	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Continue to strengthen CALD service provision	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Continue to use the Referral Management System to support NGO-to-NGO transfers	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Work in collaboration with the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) to establish mechanisms for identifying the number and quality of Aboriginal cultural care plans	TPO (AbSec)	TPO (AbSec)
Complete Aboriginal consultation guidelines	TPO (AbSec)	TPO (AbSec)
Establish mechanisms for identifying how effectively the Aboriginal Placement Principles are being applied across the sector	TPO (AbSec)	TPO (AbSec)
Continue to improve sector capacity to facilitate the placement of first-time entries to care	TPO (CS), PPS* (CS)	TPO (CS)

*Policy, Programs & Strategy

Strategy 4: Recruit, retain and support the carers to the non-government sector that children and young people need

Aims

- Carers currently supported by Community Services are transitioned to non-government service providers
- Non-government organisations are able to recruit, retain and support the number of new carers required to meet the needs of children and young people entering care, including Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children, young people and families, and children and young people with disabilities or challenging behaviours

Indicators

- Region/district transition targets met
- Non-government agencies have recruited and retained adequate numbers of carers to meet specific needs of children and young people in care
- Training across the sector offered for carers within a 12-month period

Actions	Responsibility	Reporting
Maintain consultation mechanisms with representative carer groups	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Scope "opt-out" arrangements for carers to promote transfer	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Establish Regional/District Carer Reference Group model	TPO (CS) RIGs*	TPO (CS) RIGs
Explore establishing Regional /District Children and Young People's Reference Group	TPO (CS) RIGs	TPO (CS) RIGs
Continue to model Carerlink to facilitate the transfer of carers to non-government service providers	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Further develop and monitor existing mechanisms for recruiting the number and types of carers needed to support non-government placements	PPS (CS)	PPS (CS)
Continue to develop resources to support carers to transition to non-government service providers	TPO (CS)	TPO (CS)
Implement statewide general foster care recruitment campaign and targeted foster care recruitment campaign	ACWA	ACWA

*Regional Implementation Groups

SECTION 4 Governance

Current governance structures

Strong partnerships between Community Services and non-government partners through the Ministerial Advisory Group, Transition Program Office and Regional Implementation Groups are pivotal to ensuring the successful transition of out-of-home care service delivery to the non-government sector and, particularly, for ongoing service delivery into the future.

Governance structures established to support the *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 1* (December 2011) include:

- **Ministerial Advisory Group** The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) provides statewide strategic oversight for the transition of out-of-home care services to the non-government sector
- **Transition Program Office** The Transition Program Office carries out transition planning and coordinates implementation of transition actions and activities across the state. The Transition Program Office is a partnership between AbSec, ACWA and Community Services. It is led by the Executive Leadership Group, consisting of executive directors from each partner agency
- **Regional Implementation Groups** Regional Implementation Groups (RIGs) support and drive transition at a regional level. RIGs are co-chaired by Community Services and non-government representatives. Membership within RIGs is dependent on local needs and at a minimum includes local non-government agencies, an Aboriginal NGO or representation from an Aboriginal peak, and government agencies
- **Risk management** The Transition Program Office plays a central role in identifying and mitigating systemic risks and disseminating information on innovative practices.

Details about current governance structures can be found in Appendix B.

Changes to current governance structures to support the *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*

Transition Program Office governance

Transition Program Office partner agencies have each been allocated portfolio areas. Each partner agency will lead and report on progress against related strategies and actions under these portfolios. Although Transition Program Office partners each lead these specific portfolios, the principles of partnership and collaboration remain central to the work undertaken.

Each partner agency also plays a pivotal role in building a sustainable out-of-home care sector outside of their participation within the Transition Program Office. The tables overleaf outlines the comprehensive role of each partner agency within the Transition Program Office.

TPO partner agency	TPO portfolio lead	Decision-making after MAG endorsement of action	Reporting	Accountability
AbSec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building within the Aboriginal sector to ensure viability and sustainability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal agency development - partnership support - agency workforce development • Represent the views of the Aboriginal sector to all Community Services teams involved in out-of-home care • Provide practice advice and information • Support agencies to provide high-quality cultural care planning • Support application of s13 of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> • Advocate on behalf of Aboriginal agencies involved in transition • Communicate widely with the sector and identify any systemic issues that may impact on transition and report to the TPO and government • Establish and support Aboriginal carer groups • Contribute to planning and decision making for partner portfolio areas 	AbSec, in consultation with ACWA and appropriate Community Services directorate	Quarterly, to Community Services and the MAG	<p>Community Services Funding & Contracting</p> <p>AbSec and Community Services MOU</p> <p>Responsibility to member agencies</p> <p>AbSec board</p>

TPO partner agency	TPO portfolio lead	Decision-making after MAG endorsement of action	Reporting	Accountability
ACWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate development of service sector capacity and lead/facilitate sector change Offer learning and development opportunities for NGOs Represent the views of the sector to all Community Services teams involved in out-of-home care Advocate on behalf of member agencies involved in transition Communicate widely with the sector and identify any systemic issues that may impact on transition and report to the TPO and government Collaborate with NGOs to support their work through development of policies and guidelines for operations and workforce capacity building in the sector Implement statewide general and targeted foster carer recruitment campaigns Contribute to planning and decision-making for partner portfolio areas 	<p>ACWA, in consultation with AbSec and appropriate Community Services directorate</p> <p>NB: ACWA engagement in new activities may require approval from ACWA board and membership</p>	Quarterly, to the MAG	<p>Community Services Funding & Contracting</p> <p>ACWA board</p>

TPO partner agency	TPO portfolio lead	Decision-making after MAG endorsement of action	Reporting	Accountability
Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor sector progress against transition targets • Develop and monitor progress against <i>OOHC Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014</i> • Implement <i>OOHC Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014</i> regionally • Facilitate establishment of transition processes and procedures in line with structural changes due to FACS localisation • Develop and implement policies and procedures to support the OOHC service sector • Provide service system support, including IT and communications • Provide corporate services support • Contracting and funding • Develop and implement sector-wide communication strategies • Produce Community Services workforce development strategies • Carry out carer engagement • Coordinate strategies and actions across regions, directorates and agencies • Contribute to planning and decision-making for partners' portfolio areas 	Community Services, in consultation with AbSec, ACWA and other appropriate Community Services directorates	Quarterly, to the MAG	FACS AbSec and Community Services MOU

In line with the portfolio responsibilities identified, this document identifies actions and activities that each Transition Program Office partner agency will lead and hold responsibility for reporting progress to the MAG.

Other actions and activities may fall outside agency roles as “Transition Program Office partner” but are identified as responsibilities under their funding by Community Services, for implementing projects and programs to build a sustainable non-government out-of-home care sector.

RIG governance

The Transition Program Office developed a *RIG Strengthening Governance and Operations* paper that outlines a proposal to ensure Regional Implementation Groups (RIGs) are sustainable post-Transition Program Office. The paper was endorsed by the MAG and distributed to RIGs.

A number of proposed amendments to RIG governance and reporting support the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*:

- RIGs meetings change from monthly to bi-monthly
- RIGs have a stronger connection to the MAG to support communication flow/feedback through a bi-monthly key message document
- RIGs will be able to access the MAG via a MAG agenda item for RIG issues outside the reporting framework
- RIGs will continue to have Community Services Regional Directors/District Directors and a non-government representative to co-chair up to 2014
- RIGs will report quarterly to the MAG through the Transition Program Office via a *RIG Progress Report Card*
- RIGs will establish working groups that reflect the strategies outlined within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*
- progress against these strategies will be measured against the identified aims and indicators within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*
- in addition to current RIG membership, other key government and non-government stakeholders will be invited to become members (as required by the RIG) who can contribute to the region/district’s out-of-home care strategic direction and sector development
- RIG working groups may meet monthly if required and should include expanded key government and non-government stakeholders as described above.

Post Transition Program Office – June 2014

The MAG, Transition Program Office (funded to July 2014) and RIGs have been established as temporary structures to drive transition and build a sustainable non-government out-of-home care sector.

It is necessary to establish ongoing governance that will continue to support a sustainable non-government out-of-home care sector post Transition Program Office. To facilitate further actions and build long-term governance structures beyond June 2014, it is proposed the Transition Program Office develops a governance paper for consideration by the MAG for the future.

SECTION 5 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A What has informed the Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014?

A number of key documents have informed this *Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*:

- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework (2011)*
- KPMG review
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014 survey*
- Service sector structure and policy changes
- out-of-home care forums
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Report Card – June 2013*
- *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014.*

The strategies and actions outlined in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework (2011)* have been revised and enhanced to facilitate the transition of children and young people in out-of-home care to non-government organisations and to support building the capacity of the non-government sector.

Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework (2011)

There has been significant progress against the actions and activities outlined within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework (2011)*.

The actions and activities completed in the initial stages of transition require ongoing monitoring and review to ensure they continue to meet the needs of children, young people, families and carers and support a sustainable non-government sector.

The Transition Program Office is a temporary directorate, therefore the responsibility for the ongoing implementation, monitoring and review needs to transfer to other directorates within Community Services and/or other stakeholders across the sector.

The Transition Program Office Executive Leadership Group (ELG) and Community Services Executive Director Service System Delivery, were consulted to analyse progress against each strategy and related actions in the *OOHC Transition Implementation Framework (2011)*. This informed the aims and actions for 2013-2014 and the Community Services directorate most appropriate to lead these actions/activities.

KPMG review

In December 2012, Community Services engaged KPMG to provide an independent review of the implementation of transition being led by the Transition Program Office.

The KPMG review outlined:

- current status of transition
- enablers, barriers and risks to transition
- role of current processes and structures in enabling transition
- strategies for strengthening transition structures and processes.

KPMG based its analysis of opportunities, barriers and risks to transition upon information collected from a number of sources, including a desktop review of key documents relating to the transition, interviews with focus groups and a review of transition data from December 2012.

KPMG identified eight opportunities to improve transition systems and process:

1. strengthen Transition Program Office governance structures
2. strengthen operation of the Regional Implementation Groups (RIGs)
3. improve capacity of Regional Placement Panels to facilitate first-time entries into care
4. use dedicated implementation teams within each Community Services region
5. develop agreed policies, guidelines and training to support non-government organisations in their work
6. ensure there is focus on other best practice alternatives for children and young people prior to entering out-of-home care
7. implement “opt out” arrangements for carers, to promote transfer
8. develop and implement a stakeholder engagement group.

The KPMG *Summary and Directions Paper* was developed by the Transition Program Office and endorsed by the MAG in March 2012. This paper outlines actions and activities to be undertaken to address the KPMG recommendations.

Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014 survey

This survey was distributed to the MAG, non-government organisations that attend RIGs and agencies that participate in Future Directions Forums. The survey aimed to identify key priorities for non-government organisations in the coming year and beyond transition to ensure any statewide supportive actions are included in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014*.

Service sector structure and policy changes

In the broader context, Department of Family and Community Services reforms will result in localisation of departmental activities, including a suite of proposed legislative reforms. These will impact on governance structures, processes and procedures established to support transition to the non-government sector.

Out-of-home care forums

During August and September 2013, a series of out-of-home care forums was facilitated across the state. A number of key themes emerged from this process, and the Transition Program Office Executive Leadership Group undertook analysis of these themes to inform the strategies and actions outlined.

Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Report Card – June 2013

The *Transition Implementation Framework 2011 Report Card* provides an overview of the transition of children and young people from Community Services to the non-government sector between 1 March 2012 and 30 June 2013. The Report Card outlines progress of transition against the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 1 (2011)* outcome measures and strategies, and details key achievements and future actions.

Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014

The *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014* was endorsed by the MAG in August 2013. This plan has been developed by the Transition Program Office as a guide to planning for both the Transition Program Office and RIGs. The *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 2 – 2013-2014* and RIG Transition Plans outline the actions and activities undertaken to meet the strategies and aims within the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Strategic Plan 2013-2014*. The Transition Program Office will report to the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on progress against these aims in line with the identified indicators as well as the identified outcome measures.

APPENDIX B Governance structures established to support the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework Stage 1 (2011)*

Ministerial Advisory Group

The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) provides statewide strategic oversight for the transition of out-of-home care services to the non-government sector.

MAG membership includes board members and CEOs of AbSec and ACWA, Community Services Chief Executive and Department Family and Community Services Director General. The MAG is jointly chaired by a government and non-government representative, and the group reports quarterly to the Minister for Family and Community Services.

The MAG terms of reference, as outlined in the Out-of-Home Care Transition Framework (2011), are as follows:

Ministerial Advisory Group will focus on:

- development of a coherent plan for the transition process with a view for implementation as of January 2012
- identify how the out-of-home care system can best focus on good outcomes for children and young people, and in particular, to encourage restoration and reduce the number of children entering and staying in care
- specific strategies to facilitate transition, including but not limited to:
 - options for transfer and modelling
 - referral mechanisms
 - intake and assessment of the provision of emergency placements and the introduction of a new assessment tool
 - capacity building of non-government providers, including Aboriginal services
 - negotiation of contracts and service agreements to provide incentives for restoration and flexibility to meet the changing needs of the client groups/children in care
 - service models designed to meet the needs of children and young people, and achieve outcomes for children in care, including Aboriginal children, children with disabilities, children of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those with special needs and sibling groups
 - establish a criteria for the process of selecting and funding new providers.

Transition Program Office

The Transition Program Office carries out transition planning and coordinates implementation of transition actions and activities across the state. The Transition Program Office is established as a partnership between AbSec, ACWA and Community Services. It is led by the Executive Leadership Group (ELG), consisting of executive directors from each partner agency.

Transition Program Office responsibilities, as outlined in the *Out-of-Home Care Transition Implementation Framework (2011)*, include the following:

- develop and implement an overall out-of-home care transition project plan
- identify the need for and coordinate development of common policies and procedures across the system, as required
- assist the regions to develop and monitor their own Regional Transition Plans
- capture and share good practice and success
- develop and implement program monitoring and reporting framework
- strategic identification and management of interdependence and risk issues across the state
- regular reporting to the statewide governance group on key statistics, program status and program outcomes
- develop and coordinate a cultural change strategy
- provide secretariat support to the statewide governance group
- co-ordinate responses to all external requests for program information.

Regional Implementation Groups

In addition to the MAG and Transition Program Office, Regional Implementation Groups (RIGs) support and drive transition at a regional level.

RIGs are co-chaired by Community Services and non-government representatives. Membership within RIGs is dependent on local needs and, at a minimum, should include local NGOs, an Aboriginal NGO or representation from an Aboriginal peak, and government agencies.

RIG functions, as outlined in the *OOHC Transition Implementation Framework (2011)*, include:

- develop a Regional Transition Plan in accordance with the Implementation Framework
- implement the Regional Transition Plan drive cultural change and the reform agenda collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for children in care
- establish localised collaborative practices and joint decision-making processes
- monitor and act on regular status reports in relation to any transition projects established within the region
- identify and address risks and resolve local implementation issues or take responsibility for the escalation of risks and issues so they can be resolved by the statewide governance group
- report to the statewide governance group on transition progress.

Risk management

The Transition Program Office plays a central role in identifying and mitigating systemic risks and disseminating information on innovative practices.

The Transition Program Office manages this by:

- monitoring and encouraging centralised processes
- coordinating a team of Senior Project Officers (SPOs) placed in each Community Services region/district with the objective of driving transition, supporting RIGs, supporting Transition Program Office processes and disseminating information
- ensuring RIGs identify and respond to local risks and issues and maintain region/district risk registers, with any systemic issues reported to the Transition Program Office via SPOs
- coordinating Transition Program Office road shows with the objective of providing ongoing information on transition to Community Services teams
- developing resources for carers
- coordinating and leading partnerships and communication across the sector
- developing information technology systems to support processes across the sector
- coordinating work groups to respond locally to identified regional/district risks.



Transition Program Office

