



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP**

MEDIA RELEASE

17 November 2010

IMPROVING THE FAMILY LAW SYSTEM FOR ALL

Attorney-General Robert McClelland has requested that the Family Law Council examine how the family law system can be improved to better meet the needs of Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients.

“It is imperative that our family law system meets the needs of all families,” Mr McClelland said.

“To ensure this I have asked the Family Law Council to conduct two references - one to look at the particular needs of Indigenous clients, and one to look at the needs of CALD clients.”

The Government has requested that the Council consider how the family law system, encompassing the Courts, legal assistance and family relationship services meet, or could better meet, the needs of these client groups.

The references also look at what considerations are taken into account when applying the *Family Law Act 1975* to Indigenous and CALD clients.

The examination of these issues forms part of the Government’s commitment to improving access to justice for all Australians and is consistent with the Indigenous Law and Justice Framework developed by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General.

The Family Law Council will provide a report to the Attorney-General by November 2011.

Terms of reference are attached and will be available at: www.ag.gov.au/flc

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November 2010

Family Law Council Terms of Reference

Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse clients in the family law system

I request that the Family Law Council consider and advise me by November 2011 on the following issues in relation to Indigenous clients of the family law system:

- i. ways in which the family law system (Courts, legal assistance and family relationship services) meets client needs.
- ii. whether there are ways the family law system can better meet client needs including ways of engaging clients in the family law system.
- iii. what considerations are taken into account when applying the Family Law Act to Indigenous clients.

The Family Law Council should have regard to the National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework developed by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General.

The Family Law Council should consult with representatives of Indigenous communities.

I also request that the Family Law Council consider and advise me by November 2011 on the following issues in relation to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients of the family law system:

- i. ways in which the family law system (Courts, legal assistance and family relationship services) meets client needs.
- ii. whether there are ways the family law system can better meet client needs including ways of engaging these clients in the family law system.
- iii. what considerations are taken into account when applying the Family Law Act to clients of these communities.

The Family Law Council should consult with representatives of CALD communities.