

Royal Commission on State Children's Department and Charities Department, State of Western Australia

1920 – 1921

URL:

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Details

A Royal Commission was appointed to examine the State Children Department and Charities Department, and report on “the working and management thereof, and any improvements which ought to be made in such working and management” (Final Report, Royal Commission on State Children's Department and Charities Department, p.2).

The commission held 42 sittings and examined 77 witnesses. The final report covered a number of areas, from the logistics around paying and receiving support payments, the qualifications and training provided to officers of the Department, to the care of children with intellectual disabilities, and responding to claims of child slavery at [Fairbridge Farm School](#) (the claims were dismissed).

Other jurisdictions' models of child welfare were also investigated, with the Royal Commission praising the New Zealand model in use.

Comments were made about the lack of good recordkeeping in the State Children's Department and the impact that had on the Royal Commission. It also noted that information was missing from specific files which prevented it from investigating fully.

The Royal Commission made a number of recommendations, including that boarding out be the preferred system for housing “neglected and destitute children”(Final Report, Royal Commission on State Children's Department and Charities Department, p.15). They also recommended that education in institutions be improved, and vocational education made available. Comments and recommendations were also made about creating “special schools and institutions” for children with intellectual disabilities. It does not appear that any of these recommendations were implemented.

More info

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [State Children Department, State of Western Australia \(1 January 1917 - 22 December 1927\)](#)
- [Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra \(1913 - 1981\)](#)
- [Parkerville Children's Home \(1909 - 2005\)](#)

Resources

- Swain, Shurlee, [*History of Australian inquiries reviewing institutions providing care for children*](#), October 2014
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