

Service has strong links with Bundy

Legal help for indigenous Australians

THE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service has a strong connection with the Bundaberg community, providing legal services for over 30 years to its clients.

A non-profit, community controlled organisation, the service provides criminal, civil and family law services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in Queensland.

Chief executive officer Shane Duffy said by having offices throughout Queensland and stretching from the New South Wales border to the Torres Strait Islands, clients have access to a wealth of experienced staff to help with their legal matters whilst appreciating and recognising the geographic differences that applied to certain cases.

"We provide consistent

advocacy, law reform and rights throughout our offices and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Mr Duffy said.

"With a team of over 200 staff across the state we bring together a wealth of

experience in the fields of criminal, civil and family law, and growth in the areas of law reform, community legal education and prisoner support in recent years has allowed us to provide a more

diverse range of related services to members of our communities across the state," he said.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service provides:

- law reform (aimed at prevention and early intervention);

- community legal education;

- coronial and public sector monitoring and

- a Prisoner Throughcare Program.

"Our role can be broken down into primary, secondary and tertiary," Mr Duffy said.

"Firstly on the primary level to identify a real need for legal representation; secondary to work with our people in the system; and tertiary to help people transition back

into the community," he said.

"While each day we ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and their families receive

high quality legal assistance, advice and representation, if they come into contact with the justice system, we are also influencing a positive change within

the justice system to reflect a better understanding of the culturally specific and diverse challenges that impact upon our clients and their communities."

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— Shane Duffy