INQUIRY CONFUSION A BAD SIGN

The capacity of the Child Protection Minister to properly manage her portfolio continues to be of serious concern.

Shadow Child Protection Minister Jodeen Carney said Malanndirri McCarthy claimed yesterday the Inquiry by Children’s Commissioner Howard Bath would ‘provide a report on recent issues’.

But today on ABC Radio, Dr Bath said the inquiry’s terms of reference haven’t been worked out yet.

Ms Carney said it was also noteworthy that Dr Bath was unaware how many recommendations from his 2007 inquiry had been implemented, saying only that he believed the Government had acted on a “majority” of the 30 recommendations he delivered.

“This gets to the core of why an Independent inquiry, conducted at arms length of Government, is essential,” Ms Carney said.

“That all recommendations from the Bath Report, which was handed down almost two years ago, have not been fully implemented is surprising, given assurances by the former Minister Marion Scrymgour in the 2008 Estimates Committee hearings.

“In answer to the question: Have all of the recommendations been implemented? Ms Scrymgour replied:

As far as I know, yes … “
Ms Carney said she was stunned at Gerry Wood’s announcement on radio this morning that he would support the Children’s Commissioners review in favour of an Independent inquiry into child protection.

“The welfare of Territory children is a matter of grave concern and all Members of Parliament have a responsibility to ensure that the system protects children,” Ms Carney said.

“For anyone to assert that the system and the Minster are doing well beggars belief.

“We will never-the-less write to Gerry Wood and urge him to change his mind.”

Further comment: Jodeen Carney 0407 187 992