Media Release

John Elferink, Member for Port Darwin
Minister for Children and Families

New Children’s Commissioner announced for the Northern Territory

5 June 2015

The Northern Territory Government has recommended a former Police Commander with more than 30 years’ experience in human services in the NT be appointed as the Children’s Commissioner.

Minister for Children and Families John Elferink said Cabinet decided Colleen Gwynne was the best person for the job.

“’The role of Children’s Commissioner is extremely important to the safety of children across the Northern Territory,’” Minister Elferink said.

“This is an independent statutory position with the core function of focusing on the wellbeing of vulnerable children.

“Ms Gwynne brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the position, along with a vast understanding of social issues that are specific to the Northern Territory.

“She also has experience, expertise and formal qualification in criminal justice, the management of complex investigations and compliance and risk.

“The Country Liberals Government makes no apologies for its bias in appointing talented Territorians to key positions within the NT Public Service,” Minister Elferink said.

Ms Gwynne’s career highlights include:

- Establishment of the NT Child Abuse Taskforce
- Development of the NT Police response that formed the ‘Little Children Are Sacred’ report
- Acting Assistant Commissioner, Crime and Support NT Police
- Management of a number of major investigations, including the Falconio case
Establishment of the Public Housing Safety Strategy

Adviser in PNG for the Constabulary, advising on matters including child protection

Minister Elferink thanked outgoing Children’s Commissioner Howard Bath for his tireless efforts in the role.

Ms Gwynne will take up the role of Children’s Commissioner once the appointment is finalised by the Administrator.

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