

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ("HRC")
5th MEETING OF 2025
MINUTES
3 July 2025
CONFERENCE ROOM
HRC SECRETARIAT OFFICES

PRESENT:

| | |
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| Nicholas Quin | Member (Acting Chairperson) |
| Alecia Johns | Member |
| Nicholas Dixey | Member |
| Jennifer Hunter | Member |

APOLOGIES:

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| Benjamin Tonner KC | Chairperson |
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SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:

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| Melanie McField | Manager (in part) |
| Evette Burnell | Administrator/Analyst |
| Jessica Ebanks | PR & Education Coordinator (in part) |
| Francis Kearns | Deputy Manager |

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting commenced at 3:25 pm.

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2025 were approved.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**a. Education Initiatives****i. Social Media Campaign**

The PR and Education Officer provided Members with draft social media posts to be posted over the next three months. Posts will include: celebration of Constitution Day, Plastic Free July, International Youth Day, International Literacy Day, and highlights of the HRC school visits. Members approved the posts.

ii. Bill of Rights Training

Since the last meeting there have been 25 new enrolments on the Bill of Rights (BOR) interim course, bringing the total to 440. This interim training is being offered until the comprehensive course becomes available.

The Secretariat provided an update on the comprehensive training course currently in development. The Secretariat has chosen a UK-based provider, and payment has now been approved by POCS. The provider has produced an index of what the course will include and a prototype should be ready by September with a planned completion date of October.

iii. School Visits

Members Hunter, Johns and Dixey hosted a Human Rights presentation to children at Red Bay Primary school on June 25th. There were 77 children in year 6 split between 3 classes. Each Member presented to a separate class. Members advised that the presentation was well received and the children were engaged and enthusiastic.

The PR & Education Coordinator informed Members that she will be taking an educational leave from her role in CIG to complete further studies in the UK. Members thanked her for all her work and efforts for the Commission over the last years and wished her well on her studies.

b. Migrants

Members were informed that the briefing for the Cayman Islands Legal Practitioners Association (CILPA) was sent. The briefing breaks down the requirements for migrant legal representation into two stages: Representation requirements on arrival/detention and representation requirements for appeal hearings. Following further discussions on this matter, CILPA had requested the Secretariat draft an email which could be sent to their members asking for volunteers who would be included in a list of pro bono attorneys willing to assist migrants. The list would be sent to RCIPS and CBC to be used when migrants arrive. CILPA approved the email; it will be circulated to their Members in the next few days.

The Secretariat are also looking to set up a call with the Cayman Islands Legal Assistance Clinic to establish if they may be able to offer assistance.

The HRC have still not received the requested migrant statistics from CBC or an update on the requested amendments to the migrant interview questions. Both of these points will be followed up in the next quarterly meeting. The Secretariat has been trying to contact CBC to establish a suitable date for the next meeting and is still waiting to hear back. The Secretariat will follow up again with CBC.

c. Prison Updates

The Secretariat informed Members that a call had taken place with prison management and they were informed that the area of Rehabilitation is now overseen by a Deputy Director.

In regard to plans for the new prison, the former Government had announced plans to build a new facility by 2027. There is yet to be confirmation if there will be any changes to these plans under the new government. The Secretariat will follow up on this once the new budget year commences.

One matter of concern for prison management currently is the rapid increase in prisoners with mental health issues. The number of prisoners at Northward requiring psychotropic medication to treat mental health conditions has risen from 10 to 70 out of a population of 227. The prison is also overcrowded and at maximum capacity. In addition to this, they are receiving fewer visits from the psychiatrist, who they must now share with the Poinciana facility. There used to be a weekly visit from the psychiatrist, now the visit is every 2 weeks. With the increase of prisoners with mental health issues there has also been a rise in altercations and arson/vandalism.

The Secretariat will draft a letter to the Ministry and copy in the Premier, Governor and Deputy Governor outlining these concerns and requesting information on what will be done about this in advance of the new prison being built and the timeframes for delivery. The situation with overcrowding and mental health has become unsustainable.

d. HRC Annual Report

The Chairman is to review the Chair's Message in the annual report and revert with any changes. Once this is completed the report will be finalised.

e. Mental Health

Following the concerns voiced in the last meeting regarding the lack of provision of mental health care in Grand Cayman especially for those who require critical care or those who require a secure facility, it was requested that the Secretariat look into the role and powers of the Mental Health Commission (MHC). The Secretariat provided a briefing and summary of their role and powers to Members. It was suggested by Members that the MHC should also be copied into the letter mentioned in section 3.c.

The Manager suggested an introductory meeting with the new Premier could be arranged to discuss concerns regarding the prisons and mental health. Member Dixey agreed to represent the HRC in the meeting.

4. Human Rights Complaints and Enquiries

OLD:

a. Update on Human Rights Complaint 002/2024

An appeal related to this complaint is underway. The parties are waiting on the outcome of the appeal. The Secretariat will continue to monitor this case.

b. Update on Human Rights Complaint 010/2024

Another response was received from the Complainant, but no evidence has been provided. The file will be closed with the potential to re-open the file should the Complainant provide the requested evidence.

c. Human Rights Complaint 002/2025

The Secretariat will follow up on the letter sent to Cabinet and the Ministry involved. A call will be scheduled with the Chief Officer.

d. Human Rights Complaint 003/2025

This agenda item was deferred.

e. Human Rights Complaint 004/2025

WORC confirmed that the Complainant's work permit is now approved and the case will be closed.

5. New Business

An enquirer sent an email to the HRC mailbox voicing concerns regarding the proposed change to immigration law which will mean that migrants to the Cayman Islands will not be able to apply for Caymanian status for 22 years.

The HRC will contact the Ministry concerned for a copy of the draft Bill to review in advance of it being tabled before Parliament.

6. AOB

The Secretariat informed Members that within the last few weeks three old complaints, which had previously been closed by the HRC, had been resent to the HRC mailbox. After discussion it was

decided that these files would not be reopened, as there is no change to report and the previous closure decisions still stand. The letters would be resent to the Complainants with a reminder that the HRC had closed these complaints.

7. Action Items

It was resolved the Secretariat would:

- a. Progress the BOR training and provide an update at the next meeting, as outlined in 3.a.ii (PR and Education Coordinator and Management).
- b. Follow up with CILPA regarding the email to Members, and set up a call with the Cayman Islands Legal Assistance Clinic as outlined in 3.b. above (Administrator/Analyst and Management).
- c. Follow-up with CBC to reschedule the next quarterly meeting to discuss the issues outlined in 3.b. above (Administrator/Analyst).
- d. Draft a letter to the Ministry regarding concerns on mental health in prison, as outlined in 3.c. above (Administrator/Analyst).
- e. Update the draft 2024 Annual Report once the Chair's statement is approved, as outlined in 3.d. above (Administrator/Analyst).
- f. Copy in the Mental Health Commission into the letter regarding mental health in prison, as outlined in 3.e. above (Administrator/Analyst).
- g. Reach out to the Ministry concerned for a copy of the draft Bill, as outlined in 5.a. above (Administrator/Analyst).
- h. Draft correspondence for all complaints and enquiries as detailed above (Administrator/Analyst).

8. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meeting

- a. PR & Education Initiatives
 - i. Social Media Campaign
 - ii. Bill of Rights Training
 - iii. School Visits
- b. Migrants
- c. Prisons Updates
- d. HRC Annual Report
- e. Mental Health

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled by round robin.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05pm.



Nicholas Quin
ACTING CHAIRPERSON
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION