



**Queensland  
Government**  
Queensland Health

MCZ	798
Date	14/10/04
Emailed to	
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SMB68

**RECEIVED**  
18 OCT 2004  
SB021173

**SUBMISSION TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

**DATE:** 14 October 2004

**PREPARED BY:** Paul Long, Administration Officer, Fraser Coast HSD

**Contact No:** 4120 6869

**CLEARED BY:** Michael Allsopp, District Manager, Fraser Coast HSD

**Contact No:** 4120 6865

**SUBMITTED THROUGH:** Dan Bergin, Zonal Manager, Central Zone

**Contact No:** 3234 0825

**DEADLINE:** 22 October 2004

**File Ref:** 400-0409-001

*DOB 15/10/04*

**SUBJECT:** Reporting timeframe for Australian Orthopaedic Association doctors carrying out a review of Orthopaedic Services in the Fraser Coast Health Service District

~~APPROVED~~ / NOT APPROVED

**COMMENTS**

*As per the DG's previous advice on SB021058, no extension will be granted.*

*Steve Buckland*

**DR STEVE BUCKLAND**  
Director-General  
18 / 10 / 04

**RECEIVED**  
21 OCT 2004  
MARYBOROUGH HOSPITAL

**PURPOSE:**

1. To seek the approval of the Director-General to extend the reporting time limit for Dr John North and Dr Peter Giblin from the Australian Orthopaedic Association, appointed on 6 May 2004 as investigators pursuant to Division 1, Part 6 of the *Health Services Act 1991*, for the purposes of conducting a review of the provision of Orthopaedic services in the public sector in the Fraser Coast Health Service District, to 30 November 2004.

**BACKGROUND:**

2. The Fraser Coast Health Service District approached the Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) seeking their assistance in undertaking an independent assessment of orthopaedic services within the District.
3. On 6 May 2004, the Director General appointed AOA representatives, Dr John North and Dr Peter Giblin, pursuant to Division 1, Part 6 of the *Health Services Act 1991*, as investigators to investigate matters relating to the management, administration or delivery of public sector health services as set out in Terms of Reference, and to provide a written report to Dr Buckland by 30 June 2004 or such date as agreed by him.
4. Further advice was then received from the AOA on 9 June 2004 that the two doctors were unable to carry out an inspection until the beginning of July which was outside the requested report date. The AOA also advised that it still required a letter of indemnity for the AOA itself with the AOA advised that it was prepared to allow the inspection to proceed as planned but would withhold the report pending receipt of the letter of indemnity.
5. On 28 July 2004, the Director-General granted an extension to Dr North and Dr Giblin to provide their report by 30 September 2004. However, the Director-General stated he was not prepared to indemnify the AOA itself.
6. As Dr North and Dr Giblin had carried out their inspection on 2 July 2004, the Director-General's decision was not conveyed to the AOA, and to Drs North and Giblin until after the inspection had occurred.
7. On 21 September 2004, Dr Giblin, who is also Honorary Secretary of the AOA, contacted Dr Hanelt, Director of Medical Services, Fraser Coast Health Service District, advising that the indemnity issue is causing concern at the AOA and advice is being sought. In his email, Dr Giblin also advised that additional material on Orthopaedic services at Fraser Coast is accumulating so it would appear that preparation of the report is proceeding. Dr Giblin asked whether a further 60 day extension of time could be granted for providing the report.
8. On 3 October 2004, the Director-General granted an extension to Dr North and Dr Giblin to provide their report by 31 October 2004. The Director-General stated that given the inspection occurred in early July and that he had indemnified the doctors individually there is little reason to extend the review. The Director-General's decision was conveyed to the two doctors.
9. Dr Giblin has now contacted the Health Service advising that the 60 day extension was also requested due to his commitments to a world orthopaedic conference being held in Sydney in October. Why he did not convey this fact earlier is unknown.

10. Dr Giblin has advised that this world orthopaedic meeting is attended by all English speaking countries and is held every 4 years, this time in Australia. Dr Giblin advises that he is on the organising committee for the meeting which is being held from 22 October 2004 to 30 October 2004 and that his commitments include presenting papers, chairing meetings and acting as secretary at other meetings.
11. Another mitigating factor in support of a further extension is that Dr Hanelt, the Director of Medical Services, Fraser Coast HSD, has advised that some information requested by the two investigators was only able to be provided by the Health Service in early October.

**ISSUES:**

12. The Health Service needs the AOA to be involved in the review process to lend authority to the findings of the review. This puts the AOA in a position of strength. It appears that, as members of the AOA, Dr North and Dr Giblin will delay writing their report until the AOA's position is decided.
13. Dr Giblin's commitment to the orthopaedic congress in Sydney plus the delay with the Health Service proving additional information in connection with the investigation would appear to make it unlikely that Dr Giblin can complete the report by the current deadline of end of October.

**BENEFITS AND COSTS:**

14. Obtaining assistance from the AOA in defining guidelines for the Senior Medical Officers will ensure that best practices are followed and will help allays any community concern about the Orthopaedic services the District provides.

**CONSULTATION:**

15. The need for consultation with other parties in relation to the request for an extension was not evident.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

16. N/A.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

17. It is recommended that:

- i. The Director-General grant an extension to Dr North and Dr Giblin to provide their report by 30 November 2004.