FAMILY LAW CHILDREN Best interests where the motherleft on two separate occasions during the first day ofhearing and did notreturn sibling relationships where when the mother is notpresently complying with medical advice, taking medication or drawing on the crucial support of her parents, the child is in need of protection wherethe presumption of equal shared parental responsibility is rebutted where the most appropriate course is for the child to change residenceand livewith the father, the father having at this time a greater capacity to meet hisneeds and to keep him safe, both physicallyand psychologically child tospend supervised time with the mother on a monthly basis FAMILY LAW CHILDREN Parental responsibility father to have soleparental responsibility father obliged to advise the mother of the important decisions he makes for the child and to support him in having communication with the motherby phone Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) s 60CC APPLICANT: Ms Barnwell RESPONDENT: Mr Hague INDEPENDENT CHILDRENS LAWYER: Mr Munday FILE NUMBER: CRC 121 of 2012 DATE DELIVERED: 2 October 2014 Ex-tempore PLACE DELIVERED: Brisbane PLACE HEARD: Brisbane JUDGMENT OF: Cleary J HEARING DATE: 2 October 2014 REPRESENTATION COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT: Mr Selfridge (Granted leave to withdraw during first day ofhearing) SOLICITOR FOR THE APPLICANT: Filewood Carty Lawyers (Granted leave to withdraw during first day ofhearing) COUNSEL FOR THE RESPONDENT: Mr Theodore SOLICITOR FOR THE RESPONDENT: MBT Lawyers SOLICITOR FOR THEINDEPENDENT CHILDRENS LAWYER: Moin & Associates (Mr Munday) ORDERS (1) Thatall prior parenting orders in relation to K born ... September 2006 (thechild) are discharged. (2) That the father shall have sole parental responsibility for the child andproviding the mother complies with Orders 7 shall advise the mother in writing of long term decisions (including enrolment at school, specialist medicaltreatment and religious instruction). (3) That the child shall live with the father. (4) That each of the parents shall undertake all Intake and Assessmentprocedures necessary in order to use the following supervisedContactServices: 4.1 Town BContact Centre, ... Street, Town B QLD (Town B); 4.2 Town CContact Centre NSW (Town C); Phone (02) (5) That the child shall spend time with the mother supervised on a monthlybasis, unless otherwise agreed in writing between theparents, asfollows: 5.1 each alternate month in Town B commencing November2014; AND 5.2

each alternate month in Town C commencing in December 2014. (6) The father shall be responsible for the costs of visits for the child andhis mother in the Town B Centre AND the mother shallbe responsible for the costs of visits for the child and herself in the Town C Centre. (7) The mother shall provide (in writing including by SMS text or email) hercontact details to the father including a contact telephonenumber and shalladvise of any changes in a timely way. (8) The father shall provide (in writing including by SMS test or email) hiscontact details to the mother including a contact telephonenumber and shalladvise of any changes in a timely manner. (9) Provided that the mother complies with Order 7 herein the child shallcommunicate with the mother as follows: 9.1 The mother shalltelephone the child twice per week, Tuesday and Friday, at a time between 5.30pm and 6.00 pm Queensland timeand the father shall facilitate the call byensuring that the child is available to receive the call and has privacy for the conversation. 9.2 The father shall permit and assist the child to telephone or otherwisemake contact with the mother at any reasonable time. (10) Pursuant to s 68B(1)(b) of the Act the mother is restrained from attendingthe childs school unless the father has given prior written consent forher attendance to the Principal of that school. (11) That the Independent Childrens Lawyer shall provide: Twocopies of these Orders to the Principal of Town D Primary School (with thesecond copy for provision to the SchoolCounsellor); 11.2 A copy of these Orders and Reasonsfor Judgment to the Secretary, Department of Family and Community Services NewSouth Wales. 11.3 The Independent Childrens Lawyer is thereafter discharged. (12) The Application in a Case filed by the father on 3 September 2014 is dismissed. (13) Pursuant to s 65DA(2) and s 62B of the Family Law Act 1975, particulars of the obligations that these orders create, particulars of the consequences that may follow contravention of these orders, and details of assistance to complywith these orders are set out in the attached Fact Sheet, which forms part ofthese Orders. THE COURT NOTES: (A) The father is willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the childmaintains contact with his older siblings E and F,including but not limited tomaking arrangements with the maternal grandparents for the three children to betogether in the homeof the maternal grandparents, the home of the father and/oras otherwise agreed between them. (B) Ms G, the fathers partner, is willing to bring the child with her attimes when she is

travelling to the Town C area tovisit her family in order forthe child to spend time with his maternal family. IT IS NOTED that publication of this judgment by this Court underthe pseudonym Barnwell & Hague has been approved by the ChiefJustice pursuant to s 121(9)(g) of the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth). FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA AT BRISBANE FILE NUMBER: CRC 121 of 2012 Ms Barnwell Applicant And Mr Hague Respondent And Independent Childrens Lawyer REASONS FOR JUDGMENT Inthis matter there were no appearances for delivery of Reasons; none were required. I make orders in accordance with a documentwhich will be distributed to the parties for the following reasons. Theseare competing applications for parenting orders in relation to one child; K(the child) aged eight years. The applicant is the mother, MsBarnwell, aged 29. The respondent is the father, Mr Hague, aged 37. The motherfiled her first application on 9 August 2013, the father responding on 3September 2013. Thematter was set down for final hearing commencing on 27 August 2014. Onbehalf of the mother, a brief adjournment to the following day was sought. Concerns were expressed by her own counsel about themothers mental andphysical health and capacity to give instructions on that day. A subpoena wasissued to H Aboriginal HealthService to produce the mothers medicalrecords and arrangements were made for Dr J of that service to give evidence onthesecond day of hearing. Dr J has been the mothers treatingdoctor. On28 August 2014 Dr J gave evidence by telephone that she had been prescribinganti-depressants for the mother (Lexapro) since December 2013 when the motherhad presented as suicidal and had taken an overdose of drugs. Meanwhile, duringthe hearing, the mother leftBrisbane to return to Town C, leaving a message forher solicitor and therefore the Court that she could no longer cope with the court case. Dr Js opinion in relation to the mothers capacity tocare for her children was she would be okaywith closesupport. Thefinal hearing was adjourned and 5 September 2014 was appointed as a date for aninterim hearing pending final hearing. On 5 September2014 the matter wasinstead set down for final hearing again on 30 September and 1 October 2014. The hearing commenced on the appointedday. THE EVIDENCE Theparties relied on the following documents: Transcriptof proceedings of 28 August 2014; AmendedInitiating Application of the mother filed 9 August 2013; AmendedResponse of the father filed 3 September 2013; Noticeof Child Abuse, Family Violence or

Risk of Family Violence filed by the fatheron 30 November 2012; Affidavitsof the mother filed 4 April 2014 and 2 September 2014; Affidavitsof the father filed 29 October 2013, 22 January 2014, 28 March 2014, 10 April2014 and 2 September 2014. Affidavitsof Ms G (the fathers partner) filed 29 October 2013 and 22 January2014; FamilyReport by Mr M dated 18 October 2013; and FamilyReport by Ms N dated 10 May 2013. THE MOTHER Onthe first day of this hearing the mother revealed through her counsel that hercircumstances had changed considerably. She hadon the Friday previously, thatis, 26 September 2014, moved out of her parents home in Town C to rentedaccommodation in TownN, between one and one and a half hours drive away. She had a six-month lease and was living in the new home as a single motherwiththe child and her two younger children from a previous relationship with Mr O. Those children are P born in February 2010, now aged four years eight months, and Q born in September 2012, now aged two. Themother had moved on to a relationship with Mr R, also known as She denied acontinuing relationship with Mr R stating, Isplit up with [Mr R]because of domestic violence and that he continued to live in Town C. However, it was also the evidence of the mother that Mr R had driven her and thetwo young children from Town N to Brisbane for this hearing and that he was in anearbypark with P and Q while she was at Court. The mother also said that Mr Rhad done the same thing for her in late August 2014 forthe first hearing. I amunsure about the truth of any of the evidence of the mother about Mr R, including the fact that he was present with her children while she was at Court. Therehave apparently been two pregnancies for the mother in her relationship with MrR, the most recent one having miscarried inAugust in the early stages. Itseems likely that the relationship is an ongoing one. The mother referred to MrR in her affidavitas the man who introduced her to the drugice,[1] but in her oral evidence shesaid, Hes a good person. I need a friend. Significantly, in her affidavit-in-chief the mother revealed that she had not attended herappointment with Dr J made for 3 September2014. This was an important appointment arising from the concerns that were identified and about which Dr Jgave evidence on 28August 2014. Therewas inadequate explanation by the mother for why she failed to attend the appointment. I told [Dr J] I was moving to [Town N]. The movewas three weeks after that appointment. In combination with the evidence by themother that

she was nottaking her prescribed medication, the picture whichemerged was one of the mother having a reduced capacity to meet the needs ofherchildren. She had lost the close support of her parents, crucial in DrJs evidence. She was un-medicated for mentalillness; namely, depressionand anxiety. Her explanation for that was, I honestly think Idont need it. The presence of Mr R in her life, if he is, is atbest problematic. Themother was at times tearful, belligerent and sarcastic. The proposition was putto her that in her affidavit[2] shehad said, I am going to access as much support as I can. Thefollowing day she failed to attend the appointmentwith Dr J. Themothers response to that proposition was, Must have had a realitycheck. Someone must have set mestraight. Incross-examination the mother was questioned about her medical history, including the impact of abuse in her childhood, episodicself-harm and suicidal thoughtsand attempts, at least in 2005 and again in 2013. This was confronting for themother, in my viewnot only for the usual reason that exposure in Court of such private matters is painful, but because the mother had deliberatelyconcealedthose matters from the court previously. She acknowledged thatconcealment.[3] The mother had alsoundertaken in that affidavit to comply with prescribed medication. At a point in her cross-examination, after perhaps an hour, the mother chose toleave the court room. There was a short adjournmentand some discussion withthose at the Bar table of a break for the mother and some evidence from thefather. After time spent bythe mother with her counsel she returned to the court room and resumed her cross-examination, which began with traversing themothersrequest made in March 2014 for the father to take the child tolive with him. However, before that began, her counsel was instructed to advise the Court that the mother would not be returning for the second day ofhearing. lexplained to the mother that if she made that choice she needed to understandthat the hearing would continue in her absence. Atapproximately 1.20 pm therewas a break for lunch. After that break counsel for the mother advised the Court that the mother hadleft the Court intending not to return. Counsel andjunior counsel were given leave to withdraw. Everyeffort had been made by the mothers legal advisers to maintain herparticipation in the proceedings to her best advantage. The matter thereafterproceeded in the absence of the mother. The father, his partner and one of thetwo family consultants, namelyMr L, were cross-examined.

THE FATHER Thefather gave evidence of having moved from Town B to a smaller town, approximately 40 kilometres away, in order to pursue workwhich was available tohim there as a building management officer. Havingcompleted his training he will be on call for that work. He has made inquiries about enrolment for the child at the local school, which is in walking distance of the home he has obtained; rented accommodation with three bedrooms sufficientfor himself, his partner, their child S, now aged about 16 months and the subject child. The father was a thoughtful witness. He acknowledged that he had had difficulty seeing his two older children who have been in the care of the maternal grandparents for almost nine years. Those two children, E aged 11 and F aged 10, have lived with their grandparentssince 2005. An order for their care bythe Minister of Family and Community Services New South Wales was made in 2006and a careplan was made in 2009. Thefather acknowledged that he and the maternal grandparents have clashed overtiming, financial support and the conflict betweenhimself and the mother. However, he was confident that if the child lived with him he would be able tonegotiate with the maternal grandparents to arrange for him to see his olderbrother and sister. This is a significant matter. The child has been able toregularlysee his siblings and in the last month or so, before the mother movedto Town N, had been living in the home with them. The fatherfreely expressed awish for the child to maintain contact with the mother, although he did expressconcern about what he had learnedduring the course of this hearing and his ownobservations of the mothers emotional state. MS G, THE FATHERS PARTNER Thefathers partner, Ms G, also gave thoughtful evidence. She is at homecaring for S and is willing to take on the significant amount of care for the child and will be able to get him to and from school quite easily when thefather is not able to do so. Shealso volunteered her willingness to take thechild with her when she travels from the Town B area to Town C to visit her ownextendedfamily who live close by. lam confident that Ms G understands the commitment that she is making to thefather and to the child and will provide security and affection for him in thathousehold. MR L, FAMILY CONSULTANT Thefamily consultant was cross-examined. He had not seen any member of the familyfor more than a year and had been unaware of the extensive history of mentalhealth problems that were revealed by the medical records. Havingheard about those matters and also some aspects of Mr Rs

criminalhistory, the family consultant freely conceded thatthose matters were of greatconcern for the childs safety. His recommendation had been that thechild should remain livingwith the mother, with particular reference to the significance of the maternal grandparents and his older siblings being availableto him on a daily basis. Thefamily consultant gave helpful evidence on focusing on the childs needfor support and some counselling not only in relation to separation from themother and brothers and sisters but also in relation to incidents from the pastwhere an older boy had behavedin a sexually inappropriate way with him on twoseparate occasions; the father being concerned that the child worries about thathave not yet been adequately addressed. Applications Atthe conclusion of the evidence the father and the Independent ChildrensLawyer submitted in favour of the child living with the father and the fatherhaving sole parental responsibility, the more difficult issue being how the child could safely spend time and communicate with the mother, who he has lived with all his life. THE LAW Indeciding whether to make a particular parenting order in relation to a child acourt must regard the best interests of the childas the paramountconsideration. Ihave considered the mandatory factors and conclude that the following mattersare relevant to the best interests of this child. Section 60CC(2)(a) the benefit to the child of having ameaningful relationship with both of the childs parents; and s 60CC(2)(b)the need to protect the child from physical or psychological harm from beingsubjected or exposed to abuse or family violence Inrelation to this consideration the Court is to give greater weight to s60CC(2)(b) of the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth) (the Act), thatis, the safety and protection of the child. The child does have a meaningful relationship with both of his parents but he hasbeen recently exposed to the mothers mentalhealth difficulties whichhave been a restriction on her capacity to meet his needs. He has also been exposed to family violence. The mother complains that Mr R not only introducedher to the use of the drug ice, but was violent during the course of therelationshipwhich was why she separated from him, at least for atime. Section S60CC(2A) in applying the considerations setout in subsection (2) the Court is to give greater weight to the considerationset outin paragraph (2)(b) Therewas also family violence in the relationship between the mother and the fatherof the two younger children, P and Q. Criminal records which were produced by subpoena to the Court reveal that there was an episode as

recently as July 2014, where all of the children were passengers in a car when, on one version ofevents, the mother tried to run Mr R over and his elbow broke the sidewindow of the car or, on the other version of events, Mr R attacked the mothers carand damaged it. The subject child, P,Q and a child of Mr Rs were allsitting in the car at the time. Police were called. It particularly the case, when the mother is not presently complying withmedical advice, taking medication, or drawing on thecrucial support of herparents; that the child is in need of protection. The additional considerations are as follows. Additional considerations Section 60CC(3)(a) anyviews expressed by the child and any factors (such as the childs maturity or level of understanding) that the Court thinks are relevant to the weight itshould give to the childs views Thechild has been assessed twice in family reports. In the firstreport[4] he was describedas: A shy young boy whose speech was a little unclear. He found itsomewhat difficult to sit still during the assessment and to haveeye contactwith the writer. The child said that he looked after his younger brother and sister and that he likedlooking after them. He also said he liked goingaway with the father. He wasobserved to have a relaxed, warm and conversational relationship with thefather, who understood hisspeech and conversation without difficulty. Thefather was observed to be responsive and warm towards the child and was able todraw him out in conversation on different topics. The family consultantobserved that the child appeared to be very happy playing and talking with thefather. He was also observed to be uncomfortable when both parents were present with him at the same time and did not respond to the father when the mother waspresent. The mother expressed the view that she believed that the child did notwant to hurt her feelings by speaking to the fatherin her presence. However, to her credit, the mother also said that the child thinks the world ofhis father. It seems to me that inthat observation the child, partlythrough words but also through his own behaviour, was expressing the view thathe was comfortablewith the father, enjoyed his company and was pleased to bethere. Inthe second report[5] the child wasobserved to be: .. a happy young boy who appeared to be well caredfor. He engaged happily with his mother and maternal grandfather in play. He was described by the mother as in need of speech therapy, although I notethat there is no evidence that anything has begun inthat regard. Theobservation on this second occasion was that the child was reserved and difficult

to engage in interview. He struggled to articulate his views. He had a hesitant and reserved manner and provided limited information about hiscurrent family situation. He was positive in speaking about both his parents, describing them as fun and good. He referred to hislarge extended family in Town C and spoke positively about his school. Hereported enjoying spending time with the father and recalled specialevents thathe had enjoyed, also speaking regularly to the father on the telephone. The child responded with a shrug when he was asked whether he had ever wondered whatit might be like to live with the father and go to school in that localarea. Thatsecond observation of the child suggests that he had become more careful aboutspeaking about his immediate family, but was otherwisestill closely attached toboth his parents and his extended maternal family. Section 60CC(3)(b) the nature of the relationship of the child with each of their parents and other persons The child has his most important relationships with the mother, the father, thefathers partner, his two older siblings (Eand F), his two youngersiblings (P and Q) and the maternal grandparents, Mr Barnwell and Ms T Barnwell. It will be important for the child to maintain all of those relationships ifpossible. Section 60CC(3)(c) the extent to which each of the childs parents has taken or failed to take the opportunity to participatein makingdecisions, to spend time with the child and to communicate with thechild Themother is in receipt of Commonwealth benefits and part of those benefits are directed towards the child. The father has his funds, which are compensation funds arising from an accident in 2006, but managed on his behalf. There was a complaint by the mother about thefailure of the father to pay child support. However, there was insufficiently idence for me to understandthis issue, particularly in the context of thefathers funds being managed and the father doing all of the travellingforthose times when he did see the child. I do not consider that the fatherwould fail to provide for the child as best he could. Thefather has always been interested in the child indeed in his two olderchildren. He has attempted to and participate decision-makingalthough themother has been reluctant to communicate with him about important events. Forinstance, the mother did not advise thefather of her intention to move from herparents home to independent accommodation in Town N. Section 60CC(3)(d) the likely effect of any changes inthe childs circumstances including the likely effect on the child of anyseparationfrom

either of his or her parents, or any other child or otherperson Achange of residence for the child will be a substantial change. He will nolonger see the mother and his younger siblings everyday. He has, however, already moved away from Town C, from the school where he was settled, and fromdaily contact with the maternalfamily. In that sense, a change of school isgoing to happen in any event, whether he stayed in Town N or moved to the schoolatTown D. He is likely to feel the loss of the mother and brother and sister, and I am satisfied that the father understands that the child will be upset. Section 60CC(3)(e) the practical difficulty and expense of a child spending time with and communicating with a parent Thisis a significant consideration. The mother lives on the north coast of NewSouth Wales, now in Town N. The father lives inTown D, in the Darling Downsregion of Queensland. It is a very long drive for a young child and he shouldnot have to do all ofthe travelling. The cost of petrol is a consideration and the fact that the mother does not usually drive. The father is able todrive, as is his partner, and there is some assistance there because of her willingnessto transport the child to Town C when shevisits her family. Section 60CC(3)(f) the capacity of the childsparents and any other person to provide for the needs of the child, includingemotionaland intellectual needs Thistoo is an important consideration. The father has had a limit on his capacityto be a parent since he suffered a brain injuryarising from an accident in 2006. The father fell or jumped from a vehicle and was badly hurt andhospitalised. Since then, however, he has made steady progress and is able tolive independently, and has had a partner, Ms G, for several years, and they have a childwho I have no reason to think is not progressing well. The fatherhas now moved in order to take up employment and has made significant progressin having his own finances managed by himself in future. He is hoping to buy ahome with some of those funds in the TownD area. Themother has struggled with abuse of alcohol at times. She drank liquidamphetamines in 2005 in an attempt to commit suicide andshe has taken, and thennot taken, prescribed medication to her disadvantage. Her mental health, certainly as recently as December 2013, was poor. The medical reports suggest that, at least since 2002 when the mother beganattending on H Aboriginal Health Service, she has struggledwith her own historyof sexual assault and some difficulties in her family. InNovember 2005, after the attempt to commit suicide using amphetamines, anappointment was

made for the mother to see a psychologistto address suicidalthoughts and other difficulties. She failed to attend that important appointment and the service was unableto contact her for some time. It doesseem to be a pattern for the mother that when she is feeling well she ceasesmedication anddoes not take up the medical and other advice which is available to her. Thereare reports in the records[6] whichindicate that in April 2014 during a home visit by the H Aboriginal HealthService, the mother was reported being regularlylocked in her own room byherself, afraid to leave the house and fearful that people were out to get her. After that home visitan appointment was made on 8 April 2014 for her to see MrT, psychologist, to deal with her intense anxiety and failure to leavethe home. She failed to keep that appointment. These matters are a significant restriction on the capacity of the mother to identify and meet the needs of herchildren. Section 60CC(3)(g) the maturity, sex, lifestyle andbackground of the child and either of their parents and any othercharacteristics of the child that the court thinks are relevant The child is an eight year old boy. He appears to be having difficulties with hisspeech which have gone unaddressed. He has hadsome concerns and worries aboutan older boy who behaved inappropriately with him. He has been exposed toseveral partners for themother where there has been episodic family violence. He needs a quiet, stable, predictable home in order to flourish. Section 60CC(3)(h) if the child is an Aboriginal childor a Torres Strait Islander child Themother identifies as Aboriginal. There was not a great deal of evidence aboutany connection she has to that culture. Therewas no evidence from her parentsat all. Thefather gave some evidence that it seems to him that the child has very littleknowledge about his own Aboriginality or Aboriginalculture generally and thatat times when events involving an Aboriginal community have been on and thefather has spoken to the childabout that, he has seemed to have nounderstanding of the implications for himself. That is not to say that heshould be deniedhis right to enjoy his Aboriginal culture and the people whoshare that culture. But I am confident that the father would not discouragethechild and will advise the school to the extent of his own knowledge about hisAboriginality. Section 60CC(3)(i) the attitude to the child, and tothe responsibility of parenthood, demonstrated by each of the childsparents Therehave been those two instances of sexual molestation of the child by an older boywho is known to the parties. The two eventsoccurred in

August 2009 and April2012. On the first occasion the child was a toddler. On the second occasion, as an older child, he was more conscious of what had happened and has apparently been more upset.[7] Itseems that the mother may not have been decisive enough in ensuring that thechild was not left alone with this boy after the firstincident. Thesecond incident happened in the home of that boys family and was a socialoccasion, a barbeque. Just as concerning is the fact that the mother did nottell the father about the first incident at all and he was left to find out from the Department of Child Safety after the second incident. Thefather is also, reasonably in my view, concerned that the mother was reluctant to make any official complaint on the second occasion, referring to the fact that her boyfriend had bashed the boy. The father is concerned that the mother may have been more focused on protecting her boyfriend at the time than protecting the child. Section 60CC(3)(j) any family violence involving the child or a member of the childs family and Section 60CC(3)(k) if a family violence order applies, or has applied, to the child or a member of thechilds family relevantinferences that can be drawn from theorder Asstated, there have been incidents of family violence which have affected thechild in July 2014 and earlier when Mr O was in arelationship with themother.[8] Therewas an Apprehended Violence Order put in place in August 2013 against Mr O forthe protection of the mother for a year. Therewas an incident in 2011 where Mr O is said to have punched the mother in theface and threatened her with a butter knife. Thechild was present on thatoccasion. There is also, in Exhibit 6, reference to the mother being a personof interest in a series of abusive text messages between herself and her sisterwhich became so disruptive that police were called to speak to bothwomen. Parental responsibility Havingconsidered all of those factors the most appropriate course is for the child tochange residence and to live with the father, the father having at this time agreater capacity to meet his needs and to keep him safe, both physically andpsychologically. Thereis a presumption of equal shared parental responsibilitybut I am satisfied that the evidence about the mothers state of healthand lack of support rebuts that presumption. Accordingly, the presumption that the child would spend equal time or substantial and significant time with the mother, does not arise. In fact, in the circumstances, unless the parties are able to agree otherwise, because themother cannot satisfy the father thatshe is receiving appropriate

medicaltreatment, is connected to family support, and is not maintaining a relationship with somebodywho represents a physical threat to herself and her children, supervised time is the most appropriate way. Onthat basis I have adopted the proposal of the Independent ChildrensLawyer that supervised visits take place both closeto where the father livesand to where the maternal grandparents live and where the mother most recentlylived. There are centresin Town B and Town C which can be used and that willbalance the childs need to see the mother and his brothers and sisters and grandparents as often as possible against the expense and distance of doingso. Monthly visits, where every second month occursin Town B, saves the childthat long trip and he should be able to easily cope with one such return trip toTown C every second month. Ihave made orders accordingly for the child to continue to live with the father; he is presently there on the school holidays, andfor the father to have soleparental responsibility. The father will be obliged to advise the mother of theimportant decisionshe makes for the child and to support him in having communication with the mother by phone. Ihave also made an order for these Orders and Reasons to be provided to the Secretary of the Department of Family and Community Servicesin New South Wales. I do so for these reasons: (a) As stated, the parties have three children between them, the subject child and the twoolder children, E and F, who live withthe maternal grandparents and there is the settled arrangement in place for them to continue there. (b) The motheralso has two younger children earlier referred to, P and Q, from herrelationship with Mr O. Those children are notsubject children in theseproceedings and are not children in the care of the Secretary, but they are exposed to the same risks identified in these reasons, namely, the fragile state of their mothers mental health; the risk of exposure to family violencearising from the friendship/relationship between the mother and Mr R; and thelack of extended family support. (c) I expressed these concerns during the course of the proceedings and the IndependentChildrens Lawyer also supported somestep being taken to identify therisk for those two younger children. It is the understanding of the Court thatthe Secretary wasnotified of those concerns. I certify that the preceding sixty five (66) paragraphs are atrue copy of the reasons for judgment of the Honourable Justice Clearydeliveredex-parte on 2 October 2014. Associate: Date: 13October 2014 [1] Affidavit of mother

filed02/09/2014, par 5 [2] Affidavit of mother filed02/09/2014, par 12 [3] Affidavit of mother filed02/09/2014, pars 8 & 13 [4] Family report dated10/05/2013, pars 39-45 [5] Family report dated18/10/2013, pars 67-71 [6] Exhibit 5 [7] Affidavit of father filed29/10/2013, pars 84-99 [8] Exhibit 6 AustLII:Copyright Policy|Disclaimers|Privacy Policy|Feedback URL: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/FamCA/2014/862.html