



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

**GREATER SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S HEARINGS
WELCOMED**

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) welcomes the Scottish Government's decision today (Friday 18 January 2008) to create a single national body for the Children's Hearings System as a way of strengthening support for Panel Members and improving services for the many children referred to the Children's Reporter.

A single national organisation, encompassing all the existing agencies within the Children's Hearings System, will create a more integrated approach to those youngsters most at risk in our society. It will also encourage greater co-operation and flexibility between the various bodies working in partnership to resolve these issues.

Commenting on the announcement, Douglas Bulloch, Chair of the SCRA, said: "We welcome this decisive proposal by the Scottish Government which signals unprecedented support for the Children's Hearings System in Scotland. It will build and strengthen the essential partnerships which lie at the heart of Scotland's unique system of care and justice for children.

"By adopting a 'think-nationally: act-locally' approach, the body will be able deliver significant improvements in the quality and consistency of services provided to children and young people.

"I believe this new approach will enable us to work more in partnership and respond with greater effectiveness to those children and young people who are already identified as struggling, and hopefully prevent future generations from experiencing the scale of problems that we see among the current generation of children. SCRA looks forward to working with the Scottish Government to develop this welcome proposal."

Tom Philliben, Director of Reporter Operations at SCRA, said: "We are committed to improving the quality of the services that we provide and to strengthen our ability to help the growing numbers of youngsters who are most at risk.

"For many years the Children's Reporter has worked closely with partners to improve the life chances of children and young people. This proposal will preserve the independent decision-making role of the Reporter while

maximising the opportunity to deliver a more efficient and effective Children's Hearings System. Young people and their families should experience a more rounded and comprehensive service. "