



# ***COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE***

**Members present:**

Mr PS Russo MP—Chair  
Mr MA Boothman MP  
Ms SL Bolton MP  
Ms JM Bush MP  
Ms AB King MP  
Mr JM Krause MP

**Staff present:**

Ms M Westcott—Committee Secretary  
Ms E Lewis—Assistant Committee Secretary

## **PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO THE COMMITTEE’S OVERSIGHT OF THE QUEENSLAND OMBUDSMAN**

### **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Monday, 29 April 2024**

**Brisbane**

## MONDAY, 29 APRIL 2024

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### **The committee met at 9.30 am.**

**CHAIR:** Good morning, everybody. I declare open the public hearing for the committee’s oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman. My name is Peter Russo. I am the member for Toohey and chair of the committee. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to elders past and present. We are very fortunate to live in a country with two of the oldest continuing cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people whose lands, winds and waters we all share. Other committee members with me here today are: Jon Krause, member for Scenic Rim and deputy chair; Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa; Mark Boothman, member for Theodore; Jonty Bush, member for Cooper; and Ali King, member for Pumicestone, who is substituting for Jason Hunt, member for Caloundra.

Under legislation and the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly, the committee has oversight responsibility for the Queensland Ombudsman. The purpose of today’s public hearing is to hear evidence from representatives of the Queensland Ombudsman as part of the committee’s oversight. The hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the parliament’s standing rules and orders. Only the committee and invited witnesses may participate in the proceedings. Witnesses are not required to give evidence under oath or affirmation, but I remind witnesses that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. I also remind members of the public that they may be excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee.

These proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and media may be present and are subject to the committee’s media rules and my directions at all times. I ask everyone present to turn mobile phones off or to silent mode please.

### **PYKE, Ms Angela, Deputy Ombudsman, Office of the Queensland Ombudsman**

### **REILLY, Mr Anthony, Queensland Ombudsman and Inspector of Detention Services, Office of the Queensland Ombudsman**

### **ROBERTSON, Ms Leanne, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy, Office of the Queensland Ombudsman**

**CHAIR:** I now welcome witnesses from the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman. I invite you to brief the committee, after which committee members will have some questions for you.

**Mr Reilly:** Thank you for the opportunity to make an opening statement. I would also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today. 2024 is a significant milestone for the office as it celebrates its 50th anniversary year. I trust that the committee shares with me justifiable pride on the achievements of the office in assisting tens of thousands of Queenslanders to resolve differences in their dealings with public sector agencies and in its significant contribution to improve public administration in Queensland.

The office was initially established in 1974 under the Parliamentary Commissioner Act. When introducing the bill, the Hon. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, then premier of Queensland, stated that the ‘purpose of this bill is to create in Queensland a parliamentary commissioner of administrative investigations—in other words, an Ombudsman.’ He went on to observe that the concept of the Ombudsman has evolved from the feeling of the ordinary person against the administration and that the Ombudsman was the champion of the rights of the ordinary person. Twenty-seven years later, the Hon. Peter Beattie, then premier of Queensland, introduced the Ombudsman Act 2001 which modernised the 1974 act, including formalising the title of ‘Ombudsman’. To this day we continue to champion the rights of Queenslanders but in a way that is impartial and confidential—principles established by the first Ombudsman, Sir David Longland.

The 1974 act gave the office its core functions of independently investigating administrative actions of government agencies, the ability to make recommendations on how to address problems and, when necessary, to make a report to parliament. These functions were continued by the 2001 act. Over 50 years the office has undertaken many thousands of such investigations. Some investigations

have explored complex systemic problems. Many reports about these investigations have been tabled in this parliament, recommending improvements on issues ranging from child safety to Forensic Disability Services and worker safety to councillor conflicts of interest. Earlier this year our report on prison overcrowding was tabled in parliament. The report found that overcrowding presented a fundamental challenge to achieving the objective of humane containment and made recommendations to address the problem. Of interest is that the report was initiated by a formal parliamentary reference under the Ombudsman Act which I understand to be the first such reference in our 50 years of operation.

Even when complaints do not raise a systemic issue, the office has always acknowledged their importance and examined them impartially and confidentially. Many complaints are referred to us by members of parliament, and we always welcome those referrals. These investigations cover a wide array of government actions. In the reporting year our investigations ranged from the management of dangerous dogs to Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme decisions, from prisoner concerns to decisions about grants to assist Queenslanders recovering from natural disasters. Our annual reports over the past 50 years have included many examples of these investigations. In the past four years examples have been captured in our Casebook series. We published our most recent Casebook in March 2024.

Throughout its 50 years of operation, the office has seen a steady increase in the number of cases dealt with each year. In its first year, the office dealt with 581 cases. Last year we finalised 7,165 complaints, which was a seven per cent increase from the previous year. While many other accountability bodies have been created since 1974, the strong demand for our services demonstrates our continuing importance to Queenslanders after all of this time.

The office has always sought to engage with Queenslanders and let them know that we are here to help. Changes in technology over the years have offered new ways to do so. In 1974 complaints were usually made in writing or in person. Both the creation of our website in the late 1990s and the establishment of the prisoner phone link in August 2002 extended our reach. Today complaints are almost all made over the phone, by email or online. The digital age has also provided the office with new and improved ways to provide accessible information to the public. Our website has a wealth of content and includes accessibility for multilanguage translation and people with vision impairment. Our YouTube videos provide alternative access and include Auslan and audio description content. An example referred to in our annual report is the range of community videos about how to make a complaint that we launched in March 2023 on our YouTube channel. The videos were co-designed by people who live with disability. They have been watched or listened to on the channel more than 2,000 times over the past year.

While there has been a lot of continuity at the core of the office’s progress over the past 50 years, there has also been a lot of change—and more is on the way. The Ombudsman Act 2001 ushered in our proactive improvement role. Our pursuit of this role has now developed into an integrated, multilayered strategy that includes newsletters, videos, checklists, guides, training, officer networks and advisory services.

One of the key improvement areas that we focus on is helping public sector officers to make good decisions. Once again, technology has offered new ways for us to do so. Our adoption of online training in recent years enables officers to participate in training easily from across Queensland and our Good Decisions short video has been viewed on our YouTube channel over 7,000 times since it was published in late 2021.

Another important part of our proactive role is to identify emerging issues in public administration and offer help to agencies involved in them. Our 2023 annual report highlights our work in proactively providing advice to agencies involved in areas such as determining eligibility for assistance to recover from natural disasters.

Another significant change to the office was assuming responsibility in 2013 for oversighting the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Whistleblower protection legislation in Queensland has its origins in the Fitzgerald inquiry. The inquiry was heavily dependent on witnesses coming forward with information. The 2023 review of the Public Interest Disclosure Act recently affirmed the good work of our office in performing our oversight functions under the act but noted that we would benefit from additional resources.

Over the past year we have been busy establishing the latest new addition to our responsibilities under the Inspector of Detention Services Act 2022. The office has a long history of investigating detention services, having published reports about detention issues since 2009. In 2023, in addition to recruiting our new detention inspection team, we published inspection standards for youth detention centres and prisons. We have now commenced seven inspections of detention services and are currently finalising our first reports which will be tabled in parliament soon.

Looking ahead, the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 will enhance the jurisdiction of the office by enabling it to initiate investigations of government services provided by non-government entities. Our preparation for this new work is well underway.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have held the Ombudsman role over the past 50 years and the many employees, past and present, of the office for their contribution to accountability and improved service delivery in government in Queensland. I would also like to thank the members of parliament over that same period for their continuing and bipartisan support for the office’s important work and its contribution to accountability and trust in government. As an independent officer of the parliament, I welcome the reforms in the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 to enhance our independence by increasing the involvement of parliamentary committees in the office’s work.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of Queensland for continuing to get in touch with us and seek help over the past 50 years and also, importantly, the many public sector employees for the positive and open way in which they continue to support the performance of our role. Thank you.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Thank you, Mr Reilly, for your opening statement. I want to go directly to your role as Inspector of Detention Services and in particular the alarming media report today, which I am sure you have seen already in preparation for the hearing, about abuse of children in watch houses. It is reported that young boys are being sexually assaulted and young girls suffering verbal abuse by male inmates while spending days locked in police watch houses, with the claims in the media made by an advocate. This is my question in relation to that, particularly in your role as Inspector of Detention Services in relation to watch houses: have you undertaken inspections of these watch houses in your role? First of all, have you heard claims of the type reported in the media today? I will have a couple more questions after that.

**Mr Reilly:** We have undertaken inspections of the Murgon watch house and the Cairns watch house. The reason we selected those two sites was to try and have a look at conditions for children in watch houses outside of South-East Queensland, so we selected a medium sized rural watch house—Murgon—and a large regional watch house—Cairns—and we intend to do some more probably smaller remote watch houses later in the year. Our inspection of the Cairns watch house showed that there were lots of children in there and it was very crowded. We are just finalising the report at the moment and under our act I am required to provide that report to stakeholders, including the Police Commissioner, to provide them with the opportunity to respond to any issues of concern that we have raised. We will be commencing that natural justice process soon, so I would prefer, if possible, to allow the police to respond to the issues before I put any views on the record here, if you like, but there is no doubt that the Cairns watch house was quite crowded.

**Mr KRAUSE:** How many children were there?

**Mr Reilly:** I do not have the exact number here with me.

**Mr KRAUSE:** In the 10s or 20s? Higher?

**Mr Reilly:** Certainly 10s.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Tens; okay. Can you tell us whether you have found young people in watch houses are kept separate by gender?

**Mr Reilly:** Yes, they are. Both in Murgon and Cairns they were. The infrastructure of the watch houses, as the former Police Commissioner pointed out, are not great for holding children. They are not really fit for purpose—they were not designed for it—so the police officers are doing their best with the facilities they have to separate by gender, and by and large they are achieving that. Sometimes you might find that there is a door somewhere that ideally would not be there but it has been locked and so on, but the police officers are doing their best to keep them separate with the facilities they have.

**Mr KRAUSE:** What about age? One of the allegations reported in the media was in relation to the Caboolture area watch house where several boys were in one cell. The allegation was that several boys in one cell had been groped by another older inmate. In another incident, an 11-year-old boy had been bashed. What about separation by age bracket?

**Mr Reilly:** I have not inspected the Caboolture watch house; I cannot speak about that. In Cairns and Murgon watch houses, the children and young adults up to the age of 18 are treated as a single group that might be held together, if you like, or close to each other, depending on how many rooms are available and so on.

**Mr KRAUSE:** That report was about an 11-year-old. You could have an 11-year-old in the same cell as an 18-year-old, or 17-year-old, potentially?

**Mr Reilly:** I would not dismiss that, but I do not have any—

**Mr KRAUSE:** Sure. Obviously you have inspected two watch houses and you have collected data and you are going to report. When will you report by?

**Mr Reilly:** The act requires us to provide six weeks. Once we have provided the report to the agency, we cannot table it for six weeks. The aim is to give the agency about a month to provide feedback and then finalise and lodge. I would think a little over two months probably in total.

**Mr KRAUSE:** From now?

**Mr Reilly:** Yes, because we are just finalising the report this week and next week.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Aside from your inspections, how many other assaults in other places have you heard of or have been reported to your office as the Inspector of Detention Services?

**Mr Reilly:** Assaults of?

**Mr KRAUSE:** Assaults of young people in watch houses?

**Mr Reilly:** I am not aware of any—

**Mr KRAUSE:** You can take it on notice if you would like to.

**Mr Reilly:** Yes. Can we take that one on notice? I would like to go and check that. When we do inspections, we go out to a lot of agencies and we seek information from them and say, ‘What have you seen in these places?’

**Mr KRAUSE:** In the interests of time, if you are able to take that one on notice, it would be appreciated. We can clarify that wording when we come to the end. The nature of those assaults—I think that might also be something you would want to take on notice as well?

**Mr Reilly:** Sure.

**Mr KRAUSE:** For now, Chair, I am happy to leave it at that. If we get time to come around again, I am sure I will have some more.

**Ms BOLTON:** With regard to page 13 of your report, I am unfamiliar with the situation involving the Office of the Health Ombudsman suspending its internal review function. As a result of that, can we get an update, and also whether your office is continuing to experience a significant increase in complaints as a result of that?

**Ms Pyke:** We are continuing to experience increasing complaint numbers from the OHO and the reason being is the suspension of that internal review function. The OHO, though, in their outcome notice to their complainants, they are specifying that if you have any questions or concerns about the decision, to contact them and they will assist in trying to answer those questions. However, they are unable to do a full internal review because if it was found that the decision needed to be overturned, they are unable to make a new decision. Effectively, we are the internal and external review function for the OHO at the moment. We are keeping in touch with them as to progress around the legislative reform that is required there, but, as yet, there has not been a date set for that change in the legislation.

**Ms BOLTON:** I am unfamiliar. How did that come about originally?

**Ms Pyke:** I understand that there was some legal advice which they sought on the operation of their act and it came about from that legal advice.

**Ms BUSH:** Thank you, everybody, for coming along. I always look forward to our sessions with you; I learn so much. Like my friend, I am interested as well in the detention centre inspectorate work that you will be looking at, so I will start there as well. Anthony, are you able to talk to the work and the projections that you are thinking will happen in that space around what a potential inspection regime and schedule might look like, how you might work with the other oversight bodies in that space—we do now, rightly so, have a lot of eyes and ears oversighting detention centres and watch houses, as we should—and how you might prioritise particular issues, or is it more what is fed up? I am interested in the overview of what that work will look like?

**Mr Reilly:** The act mandates certain inspections. We need to inspect each youth detention centre once per year, which we have interpreted as, if you like, a rolling 12 months—each 12 months. We also need to inspect all prisons once every five years. The way we are approaching that is there are about 15 prisons, depending on how you count them, so we are going to try to do three a year. So, there are six. The mandated watch houses are Southport and Brisbane, in five years. We decided to do some inspections of watch houses focusing on children because of community concern about the issue. We thought we would kick off there in the first 12 months and we will get back to those two large watch houses in the years ahead, is probably the strongest or most definitive I can say at this stage.

In terms of how we determine what topics to be covered in the reports, with the prison inspections, we are taking a broadbrush approach. Because we only get to inspect them once every five years, we will inspect them on the basis of all of our standards and try to do a report as a nice broadbrush approach and that then gives us a base going forward to monitor the areas that we identify for improvement and look at how things are going.

With the youth detention centres, because we are inspecting every year, we thought we have a bit more wriggle room in terms of what we do. With the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, we focused on separation because that has been such a big issue for such a long time. With the other inspections for this year, including the first one for Cleveland at the end of the year, we are going to be looking at separation, use of force, use of searches and health services. We picked those topics because they tend to be the topics that have created concern in commissions of inquiry, and they also are topics that create significant human rights concerns in closed environments. We thought that is a good group to start with. In regards to the second round of inspections, we will work out if we do a broadbrush approach or stick to a focused approach in the months ahead.

**Ms BUSH:** That is great. That sounds very solid. You obviously have a number of powers under the legislation, including requiring material to be produced for you. You can speak with witnesses; they are compelled to speak with you. You can talk about unannounced visits perhaps a bit later. Have you thought through how you are going to pull on all of those levers—I am sure you have—to maximise those visits and how you will work with those who are detained to make sure they are ready, willing and able to be fulsome with you in those visits as well?

**Mr Reilly:** Each inspection commences with the sending of formal notices to relevant agencies—prior introduction of documents about certain issues. Under the Ombudsman Act, for example, we do a lot of our investigations informally, but we thought with the inspector, we would just kick off things formally and that gives the agency, too, a nice formal platform upon which to provide the information so that they know that in providing the information, any limitations under their own act are addressed. We bring that information in.

I was out at Palen Creek prison farm last week, talking to the officers there. In the opening briefing, I explained firstly that we have had great support from senior officers in Queensland Corrective Services, as we have in Youth Justice—really good support. I also explained that we do have formal powers, and they are quite strong, but that we look forward to working respectfully and cooperatively with the officers and if they have any concerns about how we are working with them, to raise them with me and I will address them. If there are ever any issues, we sort that out with senior officers. So far, the level of cooperation has been excellent.

In terms of engaging with prisoners, we do that in a number of ways. We have engaged two First Nations engagement officers who are doing a brilliant job in engaging directly with young people in youth detention centres and also other prisoners in the adult prisons. I know, from moving around the centres with the engagement officers, the power of having them there and how it does produce good conversations. We also connect with community groups. For example, we have engaged with the Brisbane Council of Elders and have been planning some visits with them to prisons. We have sent out prisoner surveys. At Palen Creek the other day, I went around with the engagement officers and we were handing out prisoner survey forms to the prisoners. They understood the process. They understood we were independent. They were keen to fill them out, which was really good. It was a very positive response, very informed and there was even some good initial feedback even at that stage.

Those are some of the strategies we are using, as well as doing a broad-based survey with agencies to get their input. We get a lot of feedback that way as well.

**Ms BUSH:** An interim report into youth crime and victim responses from the select committee was produced by parliament in the last sittings, with 60 recommendations speaking to a range of issues around detention and watch houses. Have you had a chance to review those recommendations and are there any you would like to see expedited or brought forward?

**Mr Reilly:** I have read the report and I did read the section particularly about detention services. I thought that the recommendations about the detention services looked good to me. I say that generally because I was actually trying to pin down the status of the report, actually. I was not quite sure what its status was and how it has all been finalised. I read it and thought, ‘Yes, this is a really good report that is well informed and has lots of good ideas in it at a general level.’ In terms of the recommendations, my recollection as I read them was, ‘These are very constructive.’

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Can you list the youth detention centres that you have not been to?

**Mr Reilly:** We have inspected Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. We have inspected West Moreton Youth Detention Centre. The third one is the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre—we have started that. We are issuing the notices, but we have not done the full site inspection yet. That will happen probably by the middle of the year. That will be the three then. There are some new facilities that have been announced that will come onto our radar once they exist.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Do you know how many assaults have been committed against staff members in these youth detention centres?

**Mr Reilly:** That is a good question. I do not have the number with me. I will take that on notice to see if we have that information.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Yes, and if you could provide a breakdown of the different assaults, so to speak, the severity of them.

**Mr Reilly:** I will go into the information we have and pull out what we have.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Mr Reilly, in relation to youth detention centres, there are standards around care for people in those centres, one being a requirement of a minimum of 10 hours outside of their room each day, including at least two hours in the open and fresh air during daylight hours. In relation to your reports and inspections, how many times, if any, have you detected a breach to this standard?

**Mr Reilly:** At Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, there are separations of whole units still occurring due to staff shortages. Those separations result in children not getting out of their cells for 10 hours a day. That is happening very frequently. There are also regular occasions where children will not be getting out of their cells for two hours a day, and that is where the issue of solitary confinement comes into play. The definition of ‘solitary confinement’ is being confined for more than 22 hours a day in a cell—I should say accommodation room in a youth detention centre—but the other limb of it is ‘without meaningful human contact’. There is an issue around whether or not the children are having meaningful human contact. They do have some contact, but whether it is meaningful is another issue.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Standard 64 relates to each child having an individual case plan. Have you found this to be the case? How many children do not have one?

**Mr Reilly:** Individual case planning does occur in the youth detention centres. We meet many good staff in these detention services, including in youth detention centres, who are very committed to providing support and programs to children to try to help them improve their lives. The frustration for them is that, when the staff shortage separations cause the children to have to remain in their cells a lot, it reduces their ability to provide that support for them. While there is that planning, the staff shortage separations—

**Mr KRAUSE:** It is the same with education, I imagine.

**Mr Reilly:** Yes. There were more children attending education and programs when we inspected Cleveland in October last year than there were at the beginning of the year, so attendance has improved. The use of consecutive day separation has reduced somewhat but it still occurs. We saw children attending the school. It is an excellent school staffed by great teachers, and you could see the children enjoyed being there.

**Mr KRAUSE:** How many hours a day?

**Mr Reilly:** That can depend, depending on local conditions at the time. Sometimes they will get to have two full sessions there, sometimes only one, but the classes are full of kids. They are getting children there. They probably do not get to the school every day of the week; it is a few days a week. We have tried to provide the detail of this in the report.

**Mr KRAUSE:** So we can read about it when it is tabled.

**Mr Reilly:** The thing about it is it is quite technical and complex because the way in which the separation works is it does link to that very important safety ratio under the industrial agreement. I am deeply respectful of the need for officer safety in detention services. That safety ratio flows into children being held in their cells and flows from there into children not being able to access programs and education. As I said at your committee, Ms Bolton, that then affects the capacity of the centre to rehabilitate, if you will.

**Ms BOLTON:** I want to go to the recommendations from Coaldrake involving the Ombudsman and the implementation, including for committees. Have additional resources been provided for that?

**Mr Reilly:** Yes. In relation to the increase of our jurisdiction to investigate contracted service providers, yes, we have received some and will receive more. Angela has some details about that. She is managing that process and doing a very good job at it.

**Ms Pyke:** We did receive some increase in resources for the implementation. Those resources are in the office now. From 1 July we are receiving additional resources for when the legislation is amended and comes into play, which is on proclamation.

**Ms BOLTON:** Have there been any concerns regarding what was in the actual recommendations, especially in relation to committees? Has there been anything that has been of concern to you?

**Mr Reilly:** We were consulted about those recommendations. As an officer of the parliament, I really support the role of parliament in relation to this office. I think it is really important, so I welcome the improved level of accountability to committees. I think I indicated that in my response to the committee’s review of the bill.

**Ms KING:** I was interested to hear the increase in the number of complaints that you are experiencing. To what extent in your view is that driven by the additional responsibilities of the office of the Ombudsman and to what extent is it driven by other factors, such as increasing expectations of service by Queenslanders?

**Mr Reilly:** That is a great question. We ponder that ourselves sometimes. The jurisdiction to be able to investigate services provided by contracted service providers has not commenced yet. It will commence in the next financial year at some time so that is not a factor yet. The reporting year here was 2022-23, so that is up to June 2023. We did have an influx of COVID related complaints about the waiver of quarantine fees, which is quite interesting. Angela’s team looked after those. That attracted quite a few complaints. Angela, were there any other variations that struck you?

**Ms Pyke:** In that financial year it was mainly COVID but it depends on what is happening in the broader environment. That drives the complaints. We also need to bear in mind that the wave of complaints will be slightly delayed by the time they come to us because complainants will run through the complaints management system of the agency involved and, if they have not, we will ask that they do that before they come to us. It will be some way down the track before we see that wave.

COVID was a big one in that financial year. With the grants that get announced by government and those schemes that are available to the public—depending on when they are released and when they close—they go through those agencies and they come to us, so we see those types of waves as well. It really depends on what is happening in the broader environment. That has a big influence on complaints coming to the office.

**Ms KING:** Are there any other noteworthy trends that you have picked up through the monitoring of those complaints? Are there emerging issues for Queenslanders that you may have covered in the report or that you may be seeing subsequently?

**Mr Reilly:** With the COVID complaints, there have been three rounds of them, if you like, and they have come to an end. There were two we highlighted in the report. The first was the group of complaints that Angela referred to, which is the grants of assistance for people affected by natural disasters. Given the summer that we have been through, we anticipate that might flow through later in the year. As Angela said, it has to go through the agency’s own processes. Craig Allen, our Assistant Ombudsman who is a very experienced Assistant Ombudsman, has been doing a fantastic job working proactively with the agency. They have been really open to this process to talk about how to have good decision-making processes and subsequent complaints management processes to make sure they can do as good a job as possible. It has been a really good proactive process.

Another area we thought was important was the management of dangerous dogs. Again, Craig Allen, as Assistant Ombudsman, knows a lot about complaints about dogs in all sorts of ways. We provided some proactive advice to the department about the issues we thought relevant to good decision-making about management of dangerous dogs and the sort of capacity issues for councils and so on in terms of doing that. It has been pleasing to see reforms in that area. It has also been pleasing to see that the agency has been very receptive to our advice and is continuing to engage with us about it. They are two areas. There may be more but I will stop there.

**CHAIR:** There are only two minutes to go so I was going to use those two minutes to sort out the questions on notice.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It will not take that long, Chair.

**CHAIR:** It might. I think we have three.



**Mr KRAUSE:** The first was how many assaults on young people in watch houses have you heard of or have been reported to the office, and further to that is the nature of the assaults. Mark also asked how many assaults on staff in youth detention centres there have been and the nature of those assaults.

**CHAIR:** The secretariat will put that in an email and send it to you to assist. There was one more.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I wanted to know about reporting time frames. You mentioned two months for the watch houses. With the other reports for youth detention centres and other inspections you have done, are they of a similar time frame?

**Mr Reilly:** There is a mandated six-week period in the act, so that is my limit. The clock has started ticking on our inspection of Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. We have provided that report to the department, and we are hopeful of sending a report to the Police Service about the watch houses within weeks. That is probably the best way to say it. It is hard to finalise these things sometimes.

**CHAIR:** What about the third question, or did you outline all three?

**Mr KRAUSE:** I think they were two compound questions.

**CHAIR:** There is not a third?

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** The one about staff assaults was broken down into two parts.

**CHAIR:** As I said, the secretariat will email them to you. That concludes this hearing. Congratulations to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman in reaching its 50th anniversary. Thank you to everyone who has participated today. Thank you to our Hansard reporters. A transcript of these proceedings will be available on the committee’s webpage in due course. In relation to the questions taken on notice, could you please have those answers to the secretariat by Monday, 13 May 2024 so they can be included in our deliberations. I declare this hearing closed.

**The committee adjourned at 10.11 am.**