



EDUCATION, TOURISM, INNOVATION AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Members present:

Mr SJ Stewart MP (Chair)
Miss VM Barton MP
Mr MA Boothman MP
Mr SL Dickson MP
Mr BM Saunders MP
Mr RA Williams MP

Staff present:

Ms S Cawcutt (Research Director)
Ms M Coorey (Principal Research Officer)
Ms T Struber (Inquiry Secretary)

PUBLIC BRIEFING—INQUIRY INTO THE CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2016

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2016

Brisbane

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Committee met at 1.14 pm

CHAIR: Good afternoon, everyone. I declare open this public briefing for the committee's inquiry into the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. On 29 November the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services, the Hon. Mark Ryan MP, introduced the bill to parliament. The bill was referred to the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for examination with a reporting date of 7 March 2017.

My name is Scott Stewart, I am the member for Townsville and chair of the committee. Other members of the committee include: Ms Verity Barton, member for Broadwater and deputy chair; Mr Mark Boothman, member for Albert; Mr Steve Dickson, member for Buderim; Mr Bruce Saunders, member for Maryborough; and Mr Rick Williams, member for Pumicestone.

The committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. The proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the parliament's website. All those present today should note that it is possible you might be filmed or photographed during the proceedings. I ask everyone to please turn your mobile phones to silent mode or off. Only the committee and invited officials may participate in the proceedings. As parliamentary proceedings, under the standing orders any person may be excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the chair or by order of the committee.

The purpose of today's hearing is to assist the committee with its examination of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. We will now hear from officials from the Queensland Police Service who have been invited to brief the committee on the bill. Assisting us today are Detective Superintendent Cheryl Scanlon, Detective Inspector George Marchesini, both from the Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group, State Crime Command; Senior Sergeant Andrea Reeves, Legislation Branch and Senior Sergeant Vicki Barrett also from the Legislation Branch of the Queensland Police Service. Thank you for attending.

BARRETT, Senior Sergeant Vicki, Legislation Branch, Policy and Performance, Queensland Police Service

MARCHESINI, Detective Inspector George, Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group, State Crime Command, Queensland Police Service

REEVES, Senior Sergeant Andrea, Legislation Branch, Policy and Performance, Queensland Police Service

SCANLON, Detective Superintendent Cheryl, Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group, State Crime Command, Queensland Police Service

CHAIR: I invite you to make an opening statement after which the committee members will have some questions for you.

Det. Supt Scanlon: Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to brief the committee in relation to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. As has already been recorded, my name is Detective Superintendent Cheryl Scanlon. I am the Operations Commander for the Child Safety and Sexual Crime Group with the Queensland Police and I also hold responsibility as Child Safety Director for the Queensland Police. I would like again for the record to introduce my colleagues Detective Inspector George Marchesini, who is one of my inspectors, and both Senior Sergeant Vicki Barrett and Andrea Reeves, from the Legislation Policy Branch who have assisted in this process.

As the committee would be aware, Queensland has two distinct pieces of legislation in relation to child protection offender reporting: the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 and the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act of 2008. These two acts are part of a national suite of legislation aimed at managing the activities of reportable offenders who have been convicted of child sex offences or other particular serious offences against children.

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The impetus of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill of 2016 grew from a statutory review of the operation of the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act of 2008 which was undertaken by the Crime and Corruption Commission in 2013. As a result of the review, the Crime and Corruption Commission made a number of recommendations for legislative change which were supported by government. The bill makes legislative amendments that are necessary to fully implement these recommendations and includes other amendments aimed at streamlining the administration of the offender reporting legislation and enhancing the current protections for children. In this regard the bill amalgamates the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act of 2004 and the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act of 2008 into one distinct piece of legislation. This amalgamation will see the integration of the two pieces of legislation and, as a consequence, the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act of 2008 will be repealed upon commencement of the new legislation.

The combined legislative regime aims to remove the areas of discord that currently exist and to enable the integration of the processes associated with monitoring and managing reportable offenders in the community more effectively and efficiently. The bill will provide police with further powers they need to disrupt and prevent recidivist sexual offending against children. These new powers align with the recommendations made by the Crime and Corruption Commission and its narrative which recognises that police have limited power to manage a number of behaviours of reportable offenders, in particular in-home behaviours. To this end, the bill will allow police to require access information to electronic devices or to information which is able to be accessed through electronic devices in circumstances where there is a reasonable suspicion that the reportable offender has committed an offence under the new offender reporting legislation. The use of the new power is limited to those officers authorised by the Police Commissioner to manage reportable offenders in the community.

The offender who fails to provide access information will commit an offence and be liable to a penalty of up to 300 penalty units, or five years imprisonment. Police must apply to a magistrate for a post-approval order after the requirement has been made. With this safeguard in place, there is no provision to protect against self-incrimination.

The bill also introduces new powers to inspect electronic devices in the possession of those reportable offenders who pose the greatest risks to the lives or sexual safety of children. Police will have the power to inspect devices using specialised software of those reportable offenders who have been released from government detention or sentenced to a supervision order in the preceding three months, have been convicted of a prescribed internet offence or have been assessed as posing an increased risk of re-offending against a child. The software provides police with vital information about websites, social networking sites, instant messaging and chat rooms a reportable offender may be accessing. The software is also capable of identifying image files on the device, including child exploitation material.

The bill recognises that this power is significant and, therefore, includes adequate protective mechanisms for reportable offenders. The protective mechanisms include a restriction on the number of times that police can inspect a device in the possession of an offender and the requirement for a magistrate to provide an inspection order where a reportable offender has been assessed as posing an increased risk of re-offending against a child prior to that inspection being undertaken. A further protective mechanism will include the requirement for police to record every inspection in the enforcement act's register.

Another key feature of the bill is an extension to the definition of 'reportable offender'. This will ensure that those offenders who may not be classified as a reportable offender due to the manner in which an indictment has been presented to a court or because the offender entered into a plea bargaining arrangement may not escape classification as a reportable offender if such classification is warranted. Therefore, offenders who intend to commit a sexual or particular other serious offence against a child or attempt to commit such an offence may be liable to an offender reporting order if the court is satisfied that the facts and the circumstances of the offence have elements of a reportable offence.

The bill also strengthens the obligations placed on reportable offenders in relation to travel, contact with children and reporting information. In this regard reportable offenders will be required to report any contact with children who reside outside of Queensland where that contact is beyond the incidental contact of daily life. Reportable offenders will also be required to report the details of any children they travel with or intend or expect to have contact with outside of Queensland.

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The time frames associated with reporting travel have been reduced from seven days to 48 hours, minimising the opportunity for reportable offenders to pose a threat to children by leaving Queensland for short periods of time undetected. The bill will also require reportable offenders to report the cessation of any personal particulars which are required to be reported, for example, the sale of a car. This will ensure that information held on the National Child Offender System is accurate and relevant.

The bill aligns all suspension provisions under the offender reporting legislation. To this end, reportable offenders who are subjected to an order under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act of 2003 will be required to make an initial report of their personal particulars prior to the suspension of their reporting obligations. Conversely, those reportable offenders who have a significant mental illness will have the opportunity to seek a suspension of their reporting obligations similar to offenders with significant cognitive disorders or physical impairments. The bill will clarify that those reportable offenders who are also subject to an offender prohibition order must continue to report to police until all processes which make that person a reportable offender have ended. The length of time a reportable offender may be required to continue to report will vary depending on their offending behaviour.

The bill also addresses a number of legislative impediments hindering the effectiveness of the offender reporting legislation. For example, the term 'recent' as it applies to concerning conduct will no longer be a predeterminer of the offender prohibition order. Rather, the courts will be required to consider the timing of the conduct when deciding whether an offender prohibition order should be made. The bill also clarifies the civil aspects of the offender prohibition order process including application of the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules of 1999 and by allowing civil applications to be heard concurrent with any associated criminal matters.

Additional protections have been included in the bill for those respondents who consent to the making of an offender prohibition order. In this regard a court will be required to conduct a hearing for an offender prohibition order where the court is satisfied that it is in the interests of justice to do so. Where a hearing is not required, the court will have the opportunity to consider additional information about a respondent, for example, whether the respondent has a mental illness or a drug or alcohol addiction.

Evidentiary provisions applying to child witnesses have been extended in the bill to prohibit a self-represented respondent or reportable offender from personally cross-examining a child witness. The amendment recognises the additional trauma that may occur when a child witness is cross-examined by a person who is alleged to have offended against them. Information sharing has also been extended in the bill to allow the Police Commissioner to require information from and give information to government and non-government entities and members of the public. The bill recognises that offender information is confidential information and places limitations on the type of information the Police Commissioner can give. It also extends the penalty provisions where a person releases information about a respondent in an offender prohibition order process or a child witness for the purpose of harassing or intimidating the respondent. The bill also allows a person acting on behalf of a reportable offender to receive, review and appeal information held on the National Child Offender System.

Finally, the bill makes a number of minor amendments which reduce the administrative impost on the Queensland Police Service. Police will have the additional opportunities to take fingerprints in order to allow reportable offenders to be enrolled in any future automated electronic reporting system. Police will also have the power to take photographs of anything that is required to be reported in a location other than a police station.

The bill removes the requirement for the name and signature of a person taking a report from an offender and the length of reporting period to be included on the receipt issued. It also allows a notice advising a reportable offender of any change to the length of their reporting period to be given as soon as reasonably practical after the change has occurred. The bill includes an amendment to allow the period of an assumed identity for an authorised civilian to mirror that of a police officer in the same circumstances.

Early intervention, disruption and prevention of offences against children are the key themes of this bill and through streamlining the administration of the offender reporting legislation, a more cohesive and holistic response to the management of reportable offenders in the community can ensue. We are happy to take questions in relation to the bill.

CHAIR: I will start off. I have a couple of questions lined up but we will probably move up and down the committee panel. Are there any age restrictions or limitations for people who may be under the age of 18 that this proposed legislation may impact or affect?

Det. Insp. Marchesini: In terms of the numbers that we do have—and this has certainly come up previously in terms of youths who are on the register—at this point this time we have one reportable offender out of approximately 3,100 who is on the register, so that is a youth. We have approximately 50 offenders who have committed offences whilst being a youth—so under the age of 17—and those offenders are adults on our register. Potentially, those offenders, including the youth offender, would be liable to the proposed amendments; however, I reiterate that certainly would not be the group of people we would target. A lot of this is around the precursor type behaviour that we are looking for, and what those risk factors are that present, and they would be the reportable offenders we would target. In terms of the whole cohort of offenders, we would be targeting a particular group.

CHAIR: Is there any requirement under this legislation for a registered offender to report or register a telecommunications carriage device?

Det. Insp. Marchesini: Currently there is a schedule contained within the legislation which will be maintained and which itemises a whole range of matters that a reportable offender has to report, matters pertaining to carriage devices, passwords. I do have that schedule 2 of the current act, and the matters you are referring to are included in that schedule. We can elaborate on that if you wish.

Miss BARTON: I have a number of questions but I will ask just one and we can rotate the strike, so to speak. I am getting ready for next week's test with great enthusiasm! With respect to the concurrent application for an OPO if there is a criminal matter on foot if it is relevant, what happens in terms of the OPO and then potentially an acquittal? If the application is made during the criminal proceedings, how does that work in terms of its efficacy during the proceedings and its potential removal if a person is acquitted?

Det. Insp. Marchesini: Currently, most of the applications that we have before a court obviously are not determined until the concurrent proceedings are finalised. Obviously the amendments look at rectifying that. The majority of those prohibition orders and the applications made to a court target conduct that does not necessarily amount to criminal activity or a criminal offence. It does not mean that we cannot look at that criminal offence. What is the make-up of that particular offending can certainly form the basis of a prohibition order, but the majority if not most of those prohibition orders are based on certain conduct that does not amount to criminal offending. Whilst there may be acquittal, there may still be conduct that we would look at, particularly if it poses a risk to the lives or sexual safety of children, and there would still be potential for that application to proceed based on whatever is the information presented before a court.

Mr SAUNDERS: This question concerns the resourcing of the police to look after this legislation. The legislation seems fine and I totally agree that it has not gone far enough in terms of looking at the carriage of the Internet and things like that, but that is just a personal opinion. We can put this legislation in place, but I am hearing that in the Queensland Police Service there are officers at stations in regions looking after convicted paedophiles who do not have cars or access to do their job. We can put all the legislation in place. Will we be resourcing the officers adequately enough along with this legislation when it comes into place?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: Mr Saunders, I can answer that best as child safety director. One of the other hats I wear is also state liaison for child protection investigation units. We are very fortunate in Queensland in that the structure of our child protection offender registry staff is different. We have outposted child protection offender registry staff around the state—and that is not common in other states—and we do that so we have a team of specialists. That occurred for the Queensland Police Service after restructure in 2013. There are 22 of those officers in the field and they sit within child protection investigation units. As state liaison, I can reassure you that those officers are centrally functioned under a detective inspector and do answer to Mr Marchesini. We have a team of staff who are specialists in what they do, are resourced from my area, are placed in the regions and are supported by their local districts. For this particular cohort of police officers, this sort of work is not done by rank and file general duties officers; this work is actually done by specialised detectives placed throughout the state who are resourced adequately.

Mr SAUNDERS: I know that they are specialists, but I beg to differ with you about being resourced adequately.

Det. Supt. Scanlon: I am happy to take that on notice, Mr Saunders.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Thank you for the very comprehensive introductory speech. A little while back we heard in the media about Apple protecting its customers by refusing to open up the data of one of their phones. You spoke about specialised software. Would this specialised software get around that situation? This issue was quite well televised in the US only about six months ago. I am curious as to whether this specialised software gets around the protections on those phones to get that information?

Det. Insp. Marchesini: Thank you for your question. Some of that I will definitely take on notice, but we are continually fighting that battle. What you heard in the media in terms of Apple, software, failure to provide passwords and those sorts of things do impact on what we do. The ground changes so quickly in terms of technology. Quite often, I go into the specialist areas looking at what is being done on a daily basis. That is one area that we continually try to keep pace with. The software certainly can access a lot of the information that we are talking about, but in terms of the specifics of that I would not be able to answer that. I can take the question on notice. We certainly apply the software that we have in the field. We have a lot of success in doing that. The powers we propose obviously provide an additional layer in terms of giving us the opportunity to request or require that access to the information to go one step further. It is around looking at what other avenues we have to get past those barriers, but it certainly is a dynamic area that is continuing and there other methodologies we do which I am not able to disclose here today but which we do utilise to get around that with particular investigations.

Mr WILLIAMS: There are really significant challenges that you have, are there not? I looked at what you referred to there with respect to—correct me if I am wrong—the removal of self-incrimination in electronic devices and giving up the passwords. I understand that is part of it, right? If you are out at a particular scene and taking photographs of that scene—and I do not know whether you would have the ability to take fingerprints—the idea is to get the information up online as quickly as possible with an offender. Are there any shortfalls with those areas? You are the experts.

Det. Supt. Scanlon: It is a really challenging area. Mr Marchesini alluded to how challenging this area is, and I take your comments about keeping pace with this technology. This current bill does allow us some other opportunities to take that further than we have done before, and this issue will continue to challenge us year after year as technology changes. As I said, the bill has come from the CCC review and there are some parts of the bill that will give us other opportunities that we have not had before. This landscape may look different in another year or two. From our perspective, this is a bill that gives us additional things that will assist us to do the work where we are right now.

Mr WILLIAMS: There are no apparent shortfalls?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: I do not believe so at this stage. That could emerge later on, but we have certainly taken on board what was out of the CCC review. This piece of work has allowed to us bring forward some of those things that we felt were deficient.

Mr DICKSON: Thank you for coming along today. I am looking for a bit of clarity relating to reportable offender and to where that stretches out. I have a particular case in mind that I will talk around a little bit. A grandfather took his child along to a playground and has given her a smack because she did something silly, but he has become a reportable offender. Can you get into his telephone? Does he fit that criteria?

Snr Sgt. Reeves: The inspection provision we are talking about is looking at certain groups of offenders. If the grandfather has gone to jail, the power will allow police to go and inspect a device any time in the first three months. That is because we recognise that these people pose the greatest risk of reoffending. The idea of these inspection powers is to prevent and disrupt any offending. In that case, when the person comes out of jail or has been sentenced to a community service order by the court, then we will be able to do that. We will also be able to do it if they commit a prescribed offence using the Internet. That will be things like procuring, grooming, those types of offences. We will be able to do that four times in any 12 months and then we can only do it any further if there is evidence that the person presents an increased risk of reoffending.

Mr DICKSON: The reason I bring this up is that this particular fella is a national war hero. He lives in my electorate and is pushing back on this thing. He was reported by a lady who thought she saw him do something. He is still going through the process of getting this thing taken away. The last thing I want is to have anything to do with something that will have somebody like that caught in this net, because he is not one of the bad guys. How do we get around that?

Snr Sgt. Reeves: The intent of the legislation is also to support offenders in the community. It is not about catching people doing the wrong thing: it is about supporting them. Did you want to add something to that inspector?

Det. Insp. Marchesini: I will just add some background. Whilst we have scheduled offences within the legislation, my understanding is that those offences are serious offences committed against children. I am certainly not here to argue the merits of what you have described as a smack or otherwise, but, in terms of the types of offenders and the different classes, we are looking at a power of inspection.

There is quite a lot of time that gets taken into investigating a particular matter if we were to go down that path, that is, running software in terms of inspecting devices. As I mentioned earlier, considering we have over 3,000 offenders in total approximately and around 2,600 in the community, we certainly would take a very targeted approach in terms of what is the risk that person poses to a child, children or children generally. It is not the practice, and it certainly would not be something that we would be looking at, to put resources into offenders who we do not believe are posing a particular threat to children or the broader community.

Having said that, the legislation is that if a person is on the register there is information that they have to report. Quite often, a lot of offenders that we have on the register are reporting that information, are compliant with the act and, other than some visitations where we may verify the information and the reporting, there would be no further action that police would take. The path we are heading down is looking at what risk does that person pose? We would provide some specialist training to our people in terms of the training they would need to look at those factors and environmental factors occurring in that person's life before we undertake that sort of level of inspection.

Mr DICKSON: You have given me a little more comfort. This is the view to put into this bill or to recommend to the government that there will be some sort of a line in the sand where the smack is not so bad but we are going to crucify the fella taking pictures inappropriately of children or allow his machines to be looked at. Do not get me wrong, there is a whole lot of things where I am way out to the right and would probably like to see them hung. But all of that to one side. I do not want to see the good guys or ladies who have not really done anything bad or good caught in this net, because it will just open Pandora's box.

Det. Insp. Marchesini: Certainly, one of the recommendations that came with the CCC review was for the QPS to establish a joint working group with Queensland Corrections. We have established that this year. We have met a number of times. A lot of the work that we are doing is working a lot closer in terms of that initial period when offenders are out on supervision orders or probation and parole and, certainly, once again, targeting those offenders who we believe are the greatest risk. That is the avenue that we are heading down. It is the avenue of identifying those offenders and getting in early those precursors of what is the activity that would suggest that there could be some level of offending.

All of our investigators have a level of training in having conversations with offenders. It is certainly not a knock on the door and, bang, highly intrusive in terms of an adversarial approach. It is having a conversation with that particular reportable offender about what is going on in their life that may suggest that there is something happening. Quite often, you will find that offenders will reach out for help. They will do that where police will then be looking at referring that particular offender to whatever services may be available. That, I believe, has come through the bill.

Mr DICKSON: George, you have given me comfort. Thank you very much.

CHAIR: Can I assume that this also includes cloud technology?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: It is a device reaching into wherever that device is accessing.

CHAIR: Thanks.

Miss BARTON: I had a question about the inspection of electronic devices beyond the limitation provided in the act. You are allowed four in a 12-month period. Where you have evidence of suspected reoffending, what is the process for you? Is it an internal process within the QPS for various commissioned officers or do you have to make a court application?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: In terms of restrictions—if people are concerned about the sorts of powers that are being sought, it is limited to the specialist police and the cohort of police who are doing this. That is only a very small number across a workforce of thousands who will have the delegation to carry out that work.

The other point that is made there is that, should we receive information about an offender—if we were to take other intelligence or receive a complaint about that offender—conducting further business, downloading child exploitation et cetera, that would be treated like a normal criminal investigation. We might, in fact—

Miss BARTON: It is an automatic trigger almost?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: If we were to receive fresh information, or new information about that person offending, an investigation would take place. It may be that a search warrant would be obtained if our information was that that person was offending against a child right now or they were engaged online in child exploitation. It would follow the normal criminal offence investigation process. This is about the inspection of those offenders who are on the register who we may become concerned about with their activities to try to prevent or disrupt that behaviour.

Miss BARTON: I am more worried about whether you are able to respond in a timely manner if you receive information and you have already inspected that person's devices four times in a 12-month period. I am conscious that things can be removed very quickly—perhaps not entirely deleted, but things can be shuffled around and removed. It is more about making sure that you are not being hamstrung by having to make a particular application that can take time and potentially cost you evidence.

Det. Supt. Scanlon: That is always a challenge but, again, there is always the potential for information to be deleted, or wiped, or people to have other opportunities. Our response is 24-7. As I say, that does happen. Sometimes during investigations there will be the capacity for an offender to delete information very quickly before the police retrieve it but, again, that is a risk in any criminal investigation. In this case, we have the capacity to respond.

Mr SAUNDERS: I have two questions of the detective superintendent. One thing that concerns me about this legislation is that these types of devious people always have cohorts. They could be sharing a house. How do we know that the person they are sharing a house with, who may not be on a register but could have similar interests, is not using their devices? Is there any way that, if Joe Bloggs and Tommy So-and-So were living together, the other person's devices could be checked?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: Bearing in mind that this applies to people who are on the register, that is always a challenge and that is what investigative work is all about sometimes. We would then take an interest potentially, but that may be something that could be lost in amongst the transition. They could be using other devices. Again, that ability to monitor and manage people in the community and have those interactions by police is one of the ways, if we had a suspicion about that, but it is not a blanket access to anybody. It is restrictive and it needs to be. There is an opportunity that stuff could be lost if we do not have sufficient information if that person is not a reportable offender. Again, that is part of having specialist detectives who can interact with that person who is on the register and try to release some of that information.

Mr SAUNDERS: We are just dealing with different people as we know and as you know better than any of us. The other thing that I would like to see is the federal agencies, the Queensland police with the telcos. As we all know, if I rent a house and did damage to that house, I go on a list called TICA. I would like to see all states have a list with the telcos so that if Joe Bloggs, for example, is convicted and is on the register, before he can go on any internet or devices that it is monitored, or the police are advised. Do you know what I am saying? My personal view is that, once you have done some of these heinous crimes, you have lost those rights that citizens like everyone else has. Is there any way that the police can move with the other agencies and the federal agencies to do that?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: I think we might take that one on notice, Mr Saunders. Each state, of course, has their own suite around this stuff. It is a very challenging area and we have interaction with telcos during the course of doing our business but, as for anything legislated specifically around no more carriage service, et cetera, we might have to take that one on notice for a later time, I am afraid.

Mr SAUNDERS: It is a personal view.

Det. Supt. Scanlon: Thank you.

Mr BOOTHMAN: This is a quick follow-up. When it comes to these manufacturers, obviously, with this legislation we cannot force the hands of these manufacturers to surrender the data on these phones. Is that correct? We cannot force the hand of these manufacturers to give up passwords to access information. That is correct, is it not? My concern is that there could be an image on that of a child in danger. I return to that article that I read some time ago about Apple. This legislation cannot force them to allow that information to be accessed. That is correct, is it not?

Det. Supt. Scanlon: Part of what the specialists within Task Force Argus and other parts within Child Safety and Sex Crimes do is specialise in online investigations. The seizing of a device and examining that device will tell us certain things about what is on that device. That is why we have specialised technicians and other specialists within our organisation who forensically examine

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devices and computers and those things. We have a way to retrieve that. That is what the examination of devices gives us. We have that capacity now in the team of specialist work that we do with Task Force Argos in the online space for those types of investigations.

Mr BOOTHMAN: It certainly concerns me. I have three young kids.

Det. Supt. Scanlon: Yes. It is challenging times.

CHAIR: Unfortunately, our time is up. Thank you very much Vicki, George, Cheryl and Andrea for coming along and briefing us at such short notice. There are a couple of questions on notice. Can you respond back to us by 20 January? That gives you plenty of time to get your head around a couple of things there. Just before we go, on behalf of all the committee members could you please pass on the well regards of this committee for the great work that not only the Queensland Police Service does in our state but also the job that you do in child protection. It is outstanding. Anything that we can do to help you conduct your job in any better way and keep our kids safe, we will certainly do to the best of our ability knowing that you are doing exactly the same. On behalf of our committee, thank you. We wish you all a very merry Christmas. Thank you very much for coming in. I declare the public briefing for the committee inquiry into the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 closed.

Committee adjourned at 1.53 pm