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JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Members present:

Mr MA Hunt MP—Chair
Mr MC Berkman MP
Mr RD Field MP
Ms ND Marr MP
Hon. MAJ Scanlon
Hon. DE Farmer

Staff present:

Ms F Denny—Committee Secretary
Ms H Radunz—Assistant Committee Secretary

PUBLIC BRIEFING—INQUIRY INTO THE EXPANDING ADULT CRIME, ADULT TIME AND TAKING A STRONG STANCE ON DRUGS AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AMENDMENT BILL 2026

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Friday, 27 March 2026

Brisbane

FRIDAY, 27 MARCH 2026

The committee met at 10.30 am.

CHAIR: Good morning. I declare open this public briefing for the committee's inquiry into the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026. My name is Marty Hunt. I am the member for Nicklin and chair of the committee. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today. With me here today are the Hon. Di Farmer, member for Bulimba, acting deputy chair, substituting for Peter Russo MP, member for Toohey; Michael Berkman MP, member for Maiwar; Russell Field MP, member for Capalaba; Natalie Marr MP, member for Thuringowa; and the Hon. Meaghan Scanlon MP, member for Gaven, substituting for Melissa McMahon MP, member for Macalister.

This briefing 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 briefing at the discretion of the committee. I remind the committee members that departmental officers are here to provide factual or technical information. Any questions seeking an opinion about policy should be directed to the minister or left to debate on the floor of the House.

These proceedings are being recorded and broadcast live on the parliament's website. Media may be present—in fact, media are present—and are subject to the committee's media rules and the chair's direction at all times. You may be filmed or photographed during the proceedings and images may also appear on the parliament's website or social media pages.

I welcome representatives from the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support and the Queensland Police Service who have been invited to brief the committee on the bill.

BOYD, Ms Hannah, Acting Director, Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support

DRANE, Mr Michael, Acting Director-General, Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support

JACKWAY, Senior Sergeant Alexander, Acting Officer in Charge, Tactical Crime Squad, Fortitude Valley, Queensland Police Service

McMAHON, Ms Kate, Acting Senior Executive Director, Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support

MUDRYK, Ms Jessica, Acting Director, Strategic Policy and Legislation Branch, Queensland Police Service

TIMS, Mr John, Deputy Commissioner, Queensland Police Service

CHAIR: Please remember to press your microphones on before you start speaking and off when you are finished. Please turn your mobile phones off or to silent mode. I now invite the departments to take turns in briefing the committee after which we will have some questions for you.

Mr Drane: Good morning, committee members. I also start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet today and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also thank the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for taking the time to hear from the department today. I appreciate the opportunity to answer questions you may have on the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026, which I will from here on refer to as the bill. I would also like to thank my colleagues from the Queensland Police Service who have joined us to answer the inquiries of the committee today. They will answer any questions related to the drug diversion and antisocial behaviour aspects of the bill before you. I will shortly hand over to my colleague the deputy commissioner to make an introductory statement also.

The bill continues to implement the government's Making Queensland Safer plan. The bill aims to make Queensland safer through strengthened capability of the criminal justice system to hold those who commit serious crimes to account. I will only speak to the expansion of the Adult Crime, Adult Time sentencing scheme this morning. As part of the Making Queensland Safer Act 2024, the Adult Crime, Adult Time sentencing scheme was introduced. Under this scheme youth offenders are liable to the same maximum, minimum and mandatory penalties as adults for specified offences defined as adult crimes. Following the first stage of legislative amendments, an Expert Legal Panel was appointed to provide advice to the government on further offences for potential inclusion in the Adult Crime, Adult Time scheme. The department thanks the Expert Legal Panel for its work and advice to the minister.

The bill proposes to expand the Adult Crime, Adult Time scheme to include a further 12 offences that cause serious harm to individuals and communities. These offences are: riot if the offender causes grievous bodily harm to a person, causes an explosive substance to explode or destroys or starts to destroy a building, vehicle or machinery; indecent treatment of a child if a child is under the age of 12 years or if the child is a person with an impairment of the mind; abuse of persons with an impairment of the mind; conspiring to murder; aiding suicide; disabling in order to commit an indictable offence; choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting; stupefying in order to commit an indictable offence; endangering the safety of a person in a vehicle with intent; administering poison with intent to harm if the poison endangers the life of, or does grievous bodily harm to, the person; assaults occasioning bodily harm if the offender publishes material on a social media platform or is or pretends to be armed with a dangerous or offensive weapon or is in the company of others; and unlawful striking, intimidation, harassment or abuse.

The bill also expands Adult Crime, Adult Time to include general attempts and conspiracy to commit, and accessories after the fact to an adult crime offence as well as the standalone offence of attempted robbery simpliciter. These amendments recognise the potential harm caused to victims by these offences. While youth offenders will be liable to the same maximum, minimum and mandatory sentence penalties as adults, importantly, courts will still have sentencing discretion and will be required to impose a penalty proportionate to the seriousness of the offending behaviour and taking into consideration all of the circumstances of an individual case. Adult Crime, Adult Time significantly raises the maximum penalty that may be imposed for these offences.

Notably, these amendments to the Youth Justice Act will be subject to the human rights override as it currently stands in section 175A of the Youth Justice Act. This override declaration will expire for all Adult Crime, Adult Time offences five years after 13 December 2024. I also note the bill sits in the context of an increase of over \$500 million in outsource service delivery programs across the entire youth justice system ranging from early intervention, diversion, prevention, rehabilitation and intensive support. Finally, I will note that the proposed amendments will only apply to offences outlined in the bill which are committed after commencement.

I look forward to taking your questions. I now hand to my colleagues at the Queensland Police Service.

Deputy Commissioner Tims: Good morning, Chair and members of the committee. I would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay my respect to elders past, present and emerging.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear and aid in the committee's review of the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026. The objective of the bill is to enhance community safety and to strengthen the capability of the justice system to respond to unlawful conduct and hold perpetrators to account. The bill advances the objective by introducing three distinct legislative reform initiatives including: one, expanding the application of Adult Crime, Adult Time to include a further 12 offences; two, repealing the current police drug diversion program and introducing a new illicit drug enforcement diversion framework; and three, introducing new expanded police powers to utilise within the new designated business and community precincts. While the Adult Crime, Adult Time amendments are intended to strengthen accountability for young offenders by adding 12 offences to the scheme, they will not change policing practices and the QPS remains committed to using all available tools to address youth crime and prioritise community safety. I turn to drug diversion.

The police drug diversion program has operated since 2001 to allow police to divert eligible low-level drug offenders from the criminal justice system, which was expanded in 2024 to include additional personal use drug possession offences and provide up to three diversion opportunities. The bill repeals the existing police drug diversion program and establishes a new diversionary framework

intended to recalibrate police responses to illicit drug use with a policy intended to ensure repeat offenders are held criminally responsible for their conduct. Under the new illicit drug enforcement diversion framework, diversionary opportunities will be limited to the first time and low-risk offenders.

A strict and narrow eligibility criteria will apply to the new framework and diversion will be available under two distinctive pathways. For the minor cannabis offence or the minor drug offence, an eligible person will only be provided with a single opportunity to participate in a drug diversion program under each respective pathway. A minor cannabis offence is defined as the possession of not more than 50 grams of cannabis. Under this pathway, a police officer will be required to offer an eligible adult one opportunity to complete a drug diversion program rather than commencing criminal proceedings for that offence.

A minor drug offence relates to possession of a small prescribed quantity of dangerous drug or medicine. Under the minor drug offence pathway, instead of commencing proceedings, a police officer will have the discretion to issue an eligible offender penalty infringement notice prescribed at three penalty units, which is currently valued at \$500.70. An offender will have the option to pay the fine, elect to have the matter proceed to court or self-select to complete a drug diversion program in lieu of paying the fine.

While diversionary opportunities will not be available for low-level drug utensil offences, the bill provides police officers with the discretion to issue a standard penalty infringement notice for the offence, prescribed at two penalty units, which is currently \$333. There is no limit to the number of these infringement notices an offender may receive in a lifetime. I turn to designated business and community precincts.

The bill also introduces a framework to prescribe designated business and community precincts, which will provide police officers with expanded powers to respond to antisocial behaviour within these areas. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services will be empowered to recommend to the Governor in Council that an area be prescribed by regulation as a business and community precinct where there is a need to enhance public safety, reduce antisocial behaviour and prevent disruption to business. Police officers will be empowered to use Jack's Law to conduct handheld scanning in these precincts without requiring approval from senior police officers.

Additionally, the bill will enable police officers to give a move-on direction to a person in a designated business and community precinct for up to 24 hours where a person's behaviour or presence has caused anxiety, interfered with trade or business, is disorderly, indecent, offensive or threatening, or disruptive to the peace and order of that event or gathering. To support the timely identification of individuals and the enforcement of move-on breaches, the bill authorises police to require a person to provide their name and address when issuing a move-on direction in a designated business and community precinct or other public place.

Finally, the bill expands the police banning notice framework to apply to designated business and community precincts. A banning notice is for one month's duration unless extended and can be issued to a person at a relevant public place where the person has behaved in a disorderly, offensive, threatening or violent way and the person's ongoing presence at the precinct poses an unacceptable risk of violence or safety impacts or disrupts the peaceful passage or enjoyment of the precinct.

To equip the officers with additional tools to respond to repeat disruptive behaviour in the designated business and community precinct, the bill also enables police to issue a banning notice in the precinct where a person has contravened a move-on direction that has been given in the precinct or the person has received one move-on direction in seven days and is eligible for a further move-on direction in the same precinct. The bill will authorise police officers to issue banning notices to children in relevant public places, providing an additional response to antisocial behaviour exhibited by the child alongside existing measures including police cautions. I thank the committee for the opportunity to be here today and welcome any questions.

CHAIR: Before we go to questions, it might be helpful, Senior Sergeant, if you outline your role to the committee for us, your current position.

Snr Sgt Jackway: My current role is acting senior sergeant officer in charge of the Tactical Crime Squad in Fortitude Valley. We deal with the safe night precinct as well as high-risk offenders, drug offenders and traffic.

CHAIR: Excellent. It is great to have operational experience on the panel. I will have some questions for you shortly. I will firstly go to Mr Drane and the commissioner. Thank you, first of all, for the wonderful work you are doing in the youth justice and community safety space. This bill, as you noted, seeks to increase community safety and expand on measures we are already taking as a Brisbane

government. I understand there has been a 7.2 per cent reduction in the number of victims of crime, a 17 per cent reduction in the number of serious repeat of offenders and a 27 per cent reduction in the number of Adult Crime, Adult Time offences last year. Can you talk through what has contributed to that reduction?

Mr Drane: Chair, you are quite correct: as has been publicly reported, and it is police data so I will not refer to it too much, there has been a 7.2 per cent reduction in the number of victims and, as previously stated including by the minister in her introductory speech, a 27 per cent reduction in proven A cat offences, which is not an insignificant reduction. I think the minister also referred to a 17 per cent reduction in serious repeat offenders in the youth justice system. For the committee's benefit, that is an internal measure of how we classify serious repeat offenders around a range of factors including serious offending and the volume of offending and the prolific nature of that offending. I might start there, if that is okay. A 17 per cent reduction in that particular cohort is significant because they commit a vast proportion of all the proven offending in the youth justice system. It is a matter of public record that the Childrens Court annual report last year, 2024-25, speaks to the 18 per cent of that cohort that committed almost 48 per cent of all offending in Queensland so a 17 per cent reduction in the distinct number of serious repeat offenders means a significant reduction in the amount of proven offending committed by juveniles and it stands to reason, obviously, a lot fewer victims of crime by that particular cohort. As the government has put on record, it is early days and we, as a department and as a system working collectively, still have a lot of work to do.

They are significant reductions. Attribution to any one particular cause or factor for that reduction is difficult. Obviously, that reduction in serious repeat offenders and the A cat proven offending is significant. It is a trend we have not seen before in the youth justice system so it is significant. That is a good outcome. As I say, there is more work to do. It also stands to reason that there has been a significant investment by the government in early intervention initiatives, particularly the Kickstarter grants. We have not yet announced but we are in the market for proven initiatives. Regional Reset is up and running and Staying on Track, at the other end of the spectrum, is the 12 months of intensive support for every young person exiting custody. I guess a combination of those things, in addition to the legislation, is all contributing to a serious reduction in those figures that you rightly call out.

Ms FARMER: Chair, it has just been brought to my attention that at 10.30 today, that is, at the beginning of the public hearings, the final report of the Expert Legal Panel has been published on the department's website—not even the extensive advice that the Expert Legal Panel provided. Queenslanders have had less than two weeks to make a submission to this committee.

CHAIR: Do you have a question, member?

Ms FARMER: I am about to move something, Chair. Queenslanders have had less than two weeks to make submissions—

CHAIR: Member, this is not a time for debate. If you want to move a motion you may do that. If you would like to ask a question, you may do that.

Ms FARMER: I will move a motion and then I have the right to actually speak to that motion. I move that the public briefing and public hearing of today are delayed until Friday, 27 March to enable this committee and Queenslanders and stakeholders to review the Expert Legal Panel's final report and also the full advice that we asked for, with all other hearings to be rescheduled. This report—

CHAIR: Member—

Ms FARMER: I am entitled to speak.

CHAIR: Member, we are moving to a private hearing. Please close the broadcast.

Proceedings suspended from 10.50 am to 10.53 am.

CHAIR: We will continue with the public hearing. Member for Bulimba, do you have a question?

Ms FARMER: I will go to the member for Gaven.

Ms SCANLON: Multiple submissions reference QPS data showing the majority of people had no further contact with police after a diversion warning. Who made the decision to omit that evidence from the department's briefing note? Was there any request, suggestion or direction from the minister and ministerial office or the Crisafulli government that led to that evidence being excluded?

Ms Mudryk: There was no direction by the minister's office regarding the contents of the department's brief. Certainly, the department is an independent agency in this regard and our brief did reflect the information that we relied upon. There is obviously data regarding the QPS monitoring of who is engaging in the current drug diversion program. I do have that data available if you would like to speak to that. I can note that from 3 May 2024, which is when the expanded drug diversion

commenced, to 24 March 2026 a total of 32,659 people were diverted under tiers 1, 2 and 3. Tier 1 represented about 58 per cent of that cohort, 18,881; tier 2 represented 12 per cent, 3,915; and tier 3 represented 30 per cent approximately so that is 9,863. I do need to note for this data that it is obviously still subject to change as data can come in over time to refresh that data, but certainly it will not also capture individuals who perhaps may have been diverted under tier 1 and are encountered by police again but are not eligible for a further diversion. For example, if they are encountered by police again but their behaviour is different under those circumstances, so perhaps they might have been sentenced to a period of imprisonment for a certain offence then they no longer meet that eligibility criteria, they are not going to be captured. It cannot always accurately reflect the encounters police have with particular recidivist offenders.

Ms MARR: Michael, what feedback are you hearing about the rollout of the government's Making Queensland Safer plan, the laws and initiatives you spoke about earlier in your brief and the impact this is having on both victims and the staff in your department?

Mr Drane: In addition to the data that the chair asked me about earlier that is showing significant decreases, we have seen a great deal of commentary about the effect of deterrence and the other, I guess you could say, efficacy of the legislation. It is a matter of public record that there has been a number of published sentencing remarks by judges speaking to youth who are before them about the consequences and the material change to the consequences for the nature of the offending as it concerns A cat. On top of that, there are a range of things that we are seeing in terms of sentiment improvement. It stands to reason that for the staff of the Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support and, indeed, our colleagues in the QPS and right across the criminal justice system and in justice agencies it is heartening to see those significant reductions that we saw earlier. That is not to say that the impact on communities and victims is where we need to be and we recognise that.

The other half of our portfolio that I am responsible for is obviously victim support. We still hear some harrowing tales of the impact and the enduring impact that youth crime and all crime has on individuals and communities. That intensifies our resolve. The staff are absolutely committed to making sure that we work through the challenges that we collectively face in the system. However, I would state on the significant amount of investment that it is not just the department; we are working very closely with the sector obviously. There is a significant nearly half-a-billion dollar investment in outsourced service delivery across the whole spectrum of youth justice. Early intervention right through to rehabilitation and support is having a meaningful impact and not just on working with youth offenders. It is having an impact in supporting victims and an impact in supporting communities and families in the locations from which these youth offenders come from to try to make a difference.

Mr BERKMAN: I want to ask a question on the police drug diversion program and its repeal. The statistics that you mentioned before tell us that there are 13,778 tier 2 and tier 3 offenders over that not quite two-year period who would no longer be eligible under the proposed changes. I do not necessarily want to read the entire exert, but the evidence from QPS during the briefing when this program was introduced cited the significant benefits to QPS around the time saved. They said specifically that the time saving for police to be able to reinvest in areas where more significant harm is being done to the community is a massive benefit not only for the QPS but also the community and, importantly, the offenders themselves. Is there any operational change in QPS over the past two or three years that changes the veracity of that evidence?

Ms Mudryk: The current drug diversion program does have some efficiencies for police. Under the new program, certain efficiencies are obtained. If a police officer does identify a person with a minor drug offence they are able to issue a penalty infringement notice. That certainly is a cost saving to the justice system and police officers at large, noting that process can be finalised more rapidly rather than having that process commenced through to criminal proceedings. It does also allow for utensils. If a person is found with a drug utensil, police officers will be able to issue a penalty infringement notice for those particular offences. Again, that does provide some additional cost efficiencies for the justice service and for policing as well.

Mr BERKMAN: In terms of those 13,778 tier 2 and tier 3 encounters with police that will now necessarily move on to a charge, can you give an indication of how much police time that will involve, how much additional cost to police that will be and what those police resources will be diverted from to arrest people for small amounts of personal drug possession?

Ms Mudryk: There is no definitive projected cost or time savings that can be provided that could adequately quantify how much additional time or resourcing would need to be diverted following the amendments in the bill. However, I certainly note that the QPS is regularly reviewing how we allocate our resources and giving consideration to the needs of the community. We consistently adjust and pivot as needed to ensure resources are directed towards the most beneficial need for the community.

Mr BERKMAN: Very quickly, Chair?

CHAIR: Member, you have had two questions. We have limited time. Member for Capalaba?

Mr FIELD: The government has been very clear that the Adult Crime, Adult Time legislation does not operate in a silo. This is working in tandem with meaningful investment in early intervention and rehabilitation. Can you talk the committee through what that investment looks like in general?

Mr Drane: I might start with the government's election commitments. As you quite rightly say, and as I alluded to earlier, there is a significant investment in the justice system, most notably in outsourced service delivery—that is, non-government funded organisations and not-for-profit organisations who are delivering services alongside us in Youth Justice now. There are a number of election commitments that we see as being key and pivotal to supporting and complementing the operation of the legislation, as you say. That starts with Kickstarter grants. In the first two rounds of that program there is over \$50 million over the forwards. Forty-seven providers have been announced right across the state and there will be a further round of Kickstarter this year. We are currently in a procurement process for proven initiatives, which is the other \$65 million program to support and potentially transition the most promising initiatives that appear in that Kickstarter grant into long-term, enduring funding where they can achieve specific KPIs associated with that program. That is on the intervention end.

The Regional Reset program as well is operating across nine regional locations across Queensland. It takes referrals from a range of sources, including Education, Police, ourselves and community agencies, for young people who are not quite in the youth justice system but on the verge, who are coming to the attention of police or at risk of reoffending or disengaging from education. It aims to provide parents and those young people some community-based supports and practical supports to assist them to, as its name implies, reset that behaviour and divert those young people out of the system. Right through to the Staying on Track program, which is a significant investment, a total of \$225 million with ongoing funding—that is probably the first of its type in the nation around supporting young people when they exit custody. As the committee may know, that is 12 months of intensive support for every young person who exits a detention centre in the year. For us, that is a meaningful shift because, whilst we do some good work in terms of behavioural change and intervention with young people, Staying on Track really works with the family and the community of the young person and continues beyond the walls of detention, effectively. There is a strong evidence base for it. I think it was foreshadowed in some of the work in the previous parliament of the select committee. It is still in its infancy in terms of rollout, but we are hearing lots of positive stories about desistance from offending for young people exiting custody and better community engagement, and families saying how well supported they feel to support young people who are exiting custody who previously have been in a bit of a cycle.

Ms FARMER: My question is to the deputy commissioner with reference to the evaluation by the University of Queensland of the police drug diversion program. I have several questions. How much funding did the QPS provide to UQ for this evaluation? Has the final report been cancelled and, if so, who decided that? Will you table the 44-page progress report referenced on the UQ website?

Deputy Commissioner Tims: I will ask my colleague Jessica to answer that.

Ms Mudryk: Unfortunately, I do not have the specific figures regarding the funding that has been provided to UQ for that particular report. The current status of the final report from UQ is undetermined at this time. Certainly there would need to be conversations regarding when that would be provided or if that would be provided, acknowledging that the current bill does propose to repeal the program. It was previously scheduled to be finalised around midyear this year. I do have a copy of the interim report, which I am able to table for the committee today.

Ms FARMER: Could I ask for a response to the other question about the decision about the final report to be taken on notice? Has it been cancelled or has it not and the cost?

Ms Mudryk: I can take those questions on notice.

CHAIR: You seek leave to table that document?

Ms Mudryk: Yes.

CHAIR: Leave is granted. Senior Sergeant Jackway, I am interested in the operational aspects of the police diversion program as it currently sits—you use this sort of stuff all the time. How is it operating on the ground? What are the issues or limitations? Could you talk the committee through how it is operating currently?

Snr Sgt Jackway: Currently we have the three-tier system where we are able to give a warning when we locate drugs. Then we move on to the second part which is that, as long as they are eligible, they are to be provided the second drug diversion and then the final drug diversion. It is working relatively well.

CHAIR: Do you have any examples of any frustrations police on the ground have had with it?

Snr Sgt Jackway: Not that I can table, no.

CHAIR: In terms of the question around the time it takes police to do it, I understand you still have to seize drugs, lodge paperwork et cetera. There is still a certain amount of work that goes along with that; is that right?

Snr Sgt Jackway: That is correct. An average drug diversion will take, on the side of a road, about 15 to 20 minutes and then another 10 minutes of lodging the drugs.

Ms SCANLON: The Australian Medical Association says this decision is dangerous and contrary to advice—that is, in relation to changes to drug diversion—and that the government has jettisoned the program, despite early data showing it reduced police costs and supported patients, and has warned against setting aside science in favour of ideology. Why has the department proceeded contrary to this expert health advice, particularly given the diversion model is estimated to save up to 258,000 police hours a year?

Deputy Commissioner Tims: I will get my colleague Jessica to answer that. It is a policy question.

Ms Mudryk: I note that the decision to repeal the current drug diversion program and introduce a new framework is a policy decision for government, so the QPS would not be able to comment on that. However, I note that the policy rationale is outlined in the explanatory notes and the intention of the new framework is to ensure there is a strong deterrence, it tackles recidivist offending and does send a clear message that taking drugs and engaging in illicit drug offending is a crime, so they would like to ensure there are clear consequences for that behaviour.

Ms MARR: I want to talk about wandering and how it is promoting community safety. I know it gives us a lot of confidence. Can you comment on the effectiveness of Jack's Law so far and how that has helped with community safety?

Ms Mudryk: Jack's Law has received some very positive feedback from the community, and certainly the QPS has presented several media statements that acknowledge the number of dangerous knives that have been seized within the community. From a QPS perspective, it certainly has been able to take a lot of dangerous items off the streets. That does prevent the occurrence of additional knife crime within the community.

Ms MARR: I would assume that is one of the reasons this decision has been made for these precincts. Can you comment on the police confidence that it will be suitable in those precincts?

Ms Mudryk: Just to clarify, the bill does not nominate any particular precincts. Any precincts will be further prescribed by regulation. Certainly, the minister has the power to make a recommendation in relation to that. The QPS would not seek to comment on which precincts might be appropriate to be prescribed, but certainly we may be able to provide data and further information to assist in that decision making. Certainly, the decision to introduce Jack's Law wandering powers in these precincts is also a policy decision of government.

Mr BERKMAN: I suspect this will need to be taken as a question on notice. In the previous Adult Crime, Adult Time tranche we requested and were given on notice a tabulated set of data around the number of proven finalisations each year for the relevant offences. Is that something you can take on notice to provide or, alternatively, table if it is on hand?

Mr Drane: I was at those proceedings and I pre-empted that you may ask this question, so we do have that data available today and I am happy, through the chair, to table that data.

CHAIR: Leave is granted.

Mr BERKMAN: If I could bounce quickly onto a question around the designated business and community precincts, is it the case that these precincts, when designated, have no limit on how big they may be? For example, conceivably under the legislation an entire local government area could be designated a business and community precinct?

Ms Mudryk: I understand that it is intended to operate within standard boundaries, but certainly within the legislation there are factors—if the minister is going to make a recommendation the particular precinct is prescribed as a designated business precinct—that must be considered and, indeed, the Brisbane

minister must consult with the local council if they are considering making a recommendation to do that. Certainly there will be discussions about which precincts will need to be captured, but the intent of the legislation is to focus on particular areas where there would, for example, be a congregation, a high density of population, a lot of businesses—so it might be town centres, for example—where there is a particular concern in the community for safety or antisocial behaviour that would give reason or cause that that would be a particular precinct that would benefit from those additional policing powers.

Mr BERKMAN: I did not hear anything in your response to suggest that there is any kind of geographic constraint on how big they might be. I will leave your answer as it is and move on, if I could. I am very keen to ask as well—

CHAIR: Member, you have asked a couple of questions now. Member for Capalaba?

Mr BERKMAN: It should be a quick one, Chair. The necessary tasks that are listed in proposed section 602Q do not provide for—

CHAIR: Member, please do not ignore me. You have asked a couple of questions. We have limited time. Member for Capalaba?

Mr FIELD: This is to the department. As usual, submitters have raised concerns about the impact of the new laws and whether or not there is capacity in the youth detention centres. Are you able to tell us the current status of the youth detention centres or whether it is keeping pace with demand?

Mr Drane: I am. As at today, youth detention centres are operating at about 82 per cent capacity. For much of this year—in fact, for nearly the last 12 months—they have operated on an average of 78 per cent utilisation. That is probably the best it has been since before 2018. That is largely attributable to the commissioning and operation of the Wacol Youth Remand Centre, which occurred in April 2025. Since the passage of both tranche 1 and tranche 2 of Adult Crime, Adult Time, we have not seen significant or associated increases in the rate of custody. We are seeing some increases in the length of time that young people are being sentenced to, and that stands to reason because the bill and the previous tranches of the policy have extended the sentencing range for courts. To date, the system is keeping pace with capacity. As I say, over the last 12 months there has been an average of 78 per cent utilisation, which is the best it has been in a long time.

The only other point I might make is that there are seasonal variations to the demand. I know that is not unique to youth justice. It occurs in the corrective services system as well. Christmas, January, February and March are typically a peak period of demand. For the first time in several years we did not see any young people held in watch houses for protracted periods of time. As I say, that is largely attributable to the commissioning and operation of the Wacol Youth Remand Centre in April last year.

Ms SCANLON: Acting Director-General, multiple submitters such as the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association have raised issues surrounding the impact of Adult Crime, Adult Time on access to justice, including court delays. I note the department's response says '... it is not clear how it might increase ... legal proceedings' despite there now being available over 12 months of data on existing Adult Crime, Adult Time offences.

The department is required to provide independent, fearless and frank advice to this committee, free from political consideration. In Queensland, this committee process is the only scrutiny because we do not have an upper house. We provided multiple questions a week and a half ago, including but not limited to—

CHAIR: Member, do you have a question for the committee?

Ms SCANLON: I do. I am getting to that question, Chair. I table a copy of that letter that we provided. Criminal justice reform is incredibly serious and this committee cannot do its job—

CHAIR: Member, I am sure the department is aware of their obligations to the committee. If you could get to your question, please. They are not here for a lecture on their requirements. They are fully aware of their requirements. If you have a question for the department, please put it; otherwise, I will move on.

Ms SCANLON: My question to the department is: will you commit to taking these questions that were asked of the department in that letter on notice and provide full and timely answers?

Mr Drane: I sent a response to that correspondence yesterday. Much of the request for information was beyond the scope of the department. In fact, much of the data in your request related to the portfolios of the Department of Justice, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Housing and Public Works. Much of that data is not held by Youth Justice.

Ms SCANLON: They are not appearing before this committee. You are here on behalf of the government.

CHAIR: Member, I remind you that this correspondence is not from the committee. It is not a request from the committee to provide information to our inquiry. In terms of the questions, it is up to the chair to be diligent that they are relevant to the inquiry, and this is the first time I have seen this correspondence. I will allow the department to complete their answer with those things in mind.

Mr Drane: Thank you, Chair. It is the case that the department's resources were focused on the concurrent inquiry into the bill which is before the committee. The response to the member clearly indicated that it would be more appropriate for that response to come via the chair of the committee, and we would seek that direction.

Ms SCANLON: Point of order, Chair: given that response, I move that the department be required to answer all questions within that letter as questions on notice to this committee by Friday, 3 April 2026.

CHAIR: A motion has been moved. We will have to vacate the room again.

Proceedings suspended from 11.20 am to 11.24 am.

CHAIR: I will reopen the hearing. Mr Drane, what feedback are you hearing from youth workers on the ground in your department about the rollout of the government's Making Queensland Safer initiatives?

Mr Drane: As I alluded to earlier, particularly in terms of our detention centres, we are hearing good, positive feedback from our frontline staff around the engagement, particularly with Staying on Track providers. The major initiative, as I mentioned earlier, is designed to support young people and their families for 12 months post exit from detention. The latest data I have seen in relation to that—and given we are only five to six months in and there is variability in terms of how providers have scaled up through that program—is that there have been over 1,000 visits of mentors from each of those providers in the community into detention centres. We are hearing great, positive feedback from our frontline staff about those additional mentors and youth workers who are working collaboratively with them.

I do need to acknowledge the work of staff in detention centres. It is an incredibly challenging role. They work 24/7. There is a huge level of interaction with young people, all designed to role-model, to challenge antisocial behaviour and to turn lives around. Those mentors who are coming in from community agencies are an additional tool in that suite, and that is heartening because the detention staff had long seen the challenges when youth leave—they fall off a cliff, there is the same cycle of reoffending and then they come back through the doors. The mantra has definitely shifted to: 'How do we stop you coming back? You're here now. Let's turn your life around and make sure you're not causing grief and dysfunction in your own family home, in your community and to the victims of crime whom you have perpetrated against.'

Ms FARMER: My question is to police. In relation to the DBCPs, the member for Southport was quoted in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* as saying that they—and I am assuming he is referring to people experiencing homelessness—could go to a less populated and less busy area than the city's CBD. What assessment have you made of the displacement this policy will cause and where those individuals are expected to go? How many people will be thrown out over some arbitrary line and pushed into perhaps suburbs like Alexandra Hills and Kelso?

Ms Mudryk: I will take that question. I would like to confirm and clarify the policy intent of the designated business and community precincts. Those extended and expanded police powers are not seeking to target those who are vulnerable within the community or homeless. The parameters for when police would be able to utilise those expanded powers really focus on the behaviour—the antisocial behaviour—that they would be exhibiting. Those are the powers that police would be seeking to support. Certainly, extensive guidance is provided through training and OPMs already, for example, in relation to move-on directions or banning notices. Those are certainly not new frameworks; they have existed for an extended period of time.

When a person is homeless, an officer is always considering if they may be suffering from a mental health condition or some other type of condition and whether a different response may be appropriate—for example, an emergency examination authority. Certainly all other options are considered when encountering such vulnerable people. It is not intended to displace particular vulnerable communities who perhaps might be sleeping rough or in those kinds of similar circumstances. Councils may have alternative powers or other avenues to address that, but that is certainly not the intention of this particular proposal or for police utilising those powers.

CHAIR: With one minute to go, we will have a quick follow-up question.

Ms FARMER: Where will those displaced persons go?

CHAIR: I do not know that that is a question they can answer. I will allow you to give whatever answer—

Ms FARMER: That is what I am asking about—whether an assessment has been made about where those people will go.

Ms Mudryk: I do not believe the QPS would be able to comment on any kind of existing arrangements for emergency accommodation. The powers relate to banning notices, which under this particular framework would be for a period of 30 days if someone was subjected to that. Any further questions about additional support or resourcing might need to be directed towards the department of housing.

Ms FARMER: If a person exhibiting antisocial behaviour is moved from the CBD, they could continue that antisocial behaviour in another part of that city, basically.

Ms Mudryk: The intention is to not allow the antisocial behaviour to continue and not simply relocate it. It is to act as a disruption to that particular behaviour. It is to allow that person to perhaps take a moment to disengage from the antisocial behaviour because oftentimes a bit of a pause in that behaviour is sufficient to de-escalate the situation. Officers will try to de-escalate in other avenues but, if they are unable to do so, removing them from the environment which may be contributing to the antisocial behaviour can be beneficial.

CHAIR: Police have the power of arrest as well in those circumstances.

Ms Mudryk: Indeed.

CHAIR: I will close the hearing there. In closing these proceedings, I note one question was taken on notice about the evaluation by UQ of the drug diversion program and how much funding QPS provided to it. Please submit your response by Tuesday, 7 April 2026. I thank you all for your attendance here today and the briefing you provided to the committee. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 11.30 am.