

Executive Summary

On 20 May 2025, the Honourable Deborah (Deb) Frecklington MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity, introduced the Penalties and Sentences (Sexual Offences) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (Bill) into the Legislative Assembly. The Bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee (committee) for detailed consideration.

The objectives of the Bill are to:

- implement four recommendations from the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council report, *Sentencing of Sexual Assault and Rape: The Ripple Effect* which involve:
 - introducing a statutory aggravating factor for rape and sexual assault against children aged 16 or 17 years
 - expanding the sentencing purposes to include recognition of harm caused to a victim of an offence
 - qualifying the court’s treatment of good character as a mitigating factor in sentencing persons convicted of offences of a sexual nature, and
 - clarifying that no inference may be drawn from the absence of details of harm caused to a victim.
- introduce a new offence for falsely representing a government agency
- realign the Queensland *Crimes at Sea Act 2001* (Qld) with relevant provisions of the Commonwealth *Crimes at Sea Act 2000* (Cth)
- amend the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* to implement recommendations made in the Queensland Family and Child Commission report, *Keeping Queensland’s children more than safe: review of the blue card system*.

The committee received and considered the following evidence:

- 197 written submissions from stakeholders
- a written briefing provided by the Department of Justice (DoJ) on 27 May 2025
- evidence provided at a public hearing in Brisbane on 18 June 2025, and
- a public briefing provided by the DoJ in Brisbane on 18 June 2025.

The committee is satisfied that the Bill gives sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of Parliament as required by the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*. The committee found that the Bill is compatible with human rights as defined in the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

The committee made one recommendation—that the Bill be passed—found at page vi.