

## **2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING**

### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **No. 1**

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### **QUESTION**

Will the Minister advise of any current trends in child safety data, and how the Palaszczuk Government's reforms have assisted in keeping Queensland children safe?

#### **ANSWER**

Over the last five years we have seen an increase in both the complexity and number of families needing support in Queensland. Families coming into contact with the Department experiencing issues such as parental drug and alcohol use, domestic and family violence, and mental illness have grown increasingly prevalent, exacerbated by the additional pressures that families have faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past 12 months (to 31 March 2021), 134,300 concerns were reported to the department, one every four minutes. As at 31 March 2021, 10,929 children were in out-of-home care. This is 739 more than the same period last year (7.3 per cent increase). The majority of these children, who cannot live safely at home, were placed with either kinship carers (4937 children, 45.2 per cent) or foster carers (4671 children, 42.7 per cent). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people continue to be over-represented in the child protection system, accounting for 43.6 per cent of all children in care.

Although the demand for child safety services in Queensland continues to rise, the child and family reforms have transformed the way we work with children and families. In 2021-22, CYJMA is investing \$1.55 billion in the child protection and family support system, a 79.72 per cent increase since 2015, to meet current demand and keep Queensland children safe. In 2021-22 Queensland is investing more than \$124 million in early intervention services to help families build the skills to care for their children safely at home, and to prevent issues developing which would require more comprehensive child protection intervention.

This significant investment has allowed the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs to respond to increasing demand and pressure, while keeping Queensland children safe. For the year ending 31 March 2021, there were 28,082 notifications to child safety, an increase of 12 per cent compared to the year before.

Despite this increase in demand, the department is responding to notifications faster than ever before. For the highest priority 24-hour notifications, 95 per cent of investigations were commenced within timeframe. Taken together with 5 and 10 day notifications, 53 per cent of investigations are now commencing within timeframe, up from 44 per cent for year ending 31 March 2020. In real terms, this means that nearly 3,200 more investigations commenced on time in the year to March 2021, an incredible performance in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the great work of our CSOs which has allowed us to meet this increased need.

Department staff and partners work hard to support families. Tens of thousands of Queensland children and families have accessed early intervention support services, and nearly 700 additional frontline Child Safety positions have been created since 2015. The average caseload per Child Safety Officer remains at around 18. This enables frontline workers to create more meaningful relationships with children and families in need and further strengthen our focus on prevention and early intervention providing more cohesive services for vulnerable families and children.

While Queensland has one of the lowest rates of overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care in Australia, current figures are unacceptable, and more work needs to be done.

*Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2037* forms the core impetus of the government's reforms in this space. Some of the initiatives under *Our Way* are nation leading. Queensland's trial of delegated Authority, extended to two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Community Controlled Organisations, in Central Queensland Indigenous Development, based in Rockhampton, and REFOCUS, based on the Sunshine Coast, will play a key role in enabling and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to take control of a key component of Child Protection Services.

Simultaneously, the department is working closely with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) and relevant stakeholders to embed active efforts to implement and give full effect to the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle across all areas of the child protection system. The department is also partnering with QATSICPP to develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship program to maximise placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care with family and/or kin.

These efforts exemplify the government's commitment to responding to demand in the child protection system and eliminating the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at all levels of intervention. COVID-19 has been challenging for many Queenslanders, particularly vulnerable Queenslanders. The Government's ongoing significant investment in frontline child protection services has allowed the department to not only meet the increasing demand head-on, but also to improve against several key metrics.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 2

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise the Palaszczuk Government's progress in implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse?

#### ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government is proud of the reforms implemented in Queensland to respond to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce who provide invaluable advice on implementation. I would like to thank the Taskforce members with lived experience for their commitment and insight, and acknowledge the efforts of the Taskforce Chair and former Commissioner of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Mr Bob Atkinson AO, APM.

The Royal Commission was a turning point for Australia. It revealed the extent of unacceptable child abuse in Australian institutions; the courage and strength of people with lived experience; and emphasised the shared responsibility of individuals, institutions, and society to keep children safe.

Together, the 409 recommendations of the Royal Commission established a comprehensive reform agenda to prevent child sexual abuse and grow safe organisations, protect children and young people and support the healing of people with lived experience.

We are past mid-way through this reform agenda. Of the 409 recommendations, 317 were directed at state and territory governments. Of these, the Queensland Government has completed 162 recommendations with the remaining 155 recommendations in progress.

Achievements include:

- reforms to the criminal justice system to better respond to child sexual abuse including new offences of failing to report a child sexual abuse offence and failing to protect a child from a child sexual offence
- creating safer places for children by:
  - reforms to the Queensland blue card system, including 'No card, No start' where a blue card is now required before a person starts working with children
  - the release of the *Aware. Protective. Safe. Strategy* to strengthen the approach to keeping children and young people safe in Queensland schools and early childhood services
- supporting people with lived experience through:
  - a pilot intermediary scheme to provide better support for vulnerable witnesses
  - training for the Queensland Police Service to provide trauma-informed responses to people who have experienced sexual assault
  - adapting the Hope and Healing Framework for residential care services to support trauma-informed responses in foster and kinship care

- ongoing participation in the National Redress Scheme and civil litigation reforms to improve access to justice by people with lived experience.

While much has been achieved, there is more important work to do. Key priorities include:

- considering ways to strengthen the voices of children in child protection decision making
- exploring options for potential regulation of child safe standards and establishment of a Queensland reportable conduct scheme. Importantly, we have conducted targeted consultation and the input from a range of stakeholders will inform our next steps.

In addition, the Queensland Government continues to work with the Federal Government and state and territory governments on a number of national initiatives including:

- the development of the National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse, due for release by the Federal Government in September 2021
- the development of the successor plan to the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, due for release by the Federal Government later this year

On 23 June 2021, the National Redress Scheme published Ms Robyn Kruk AO's *Second year review of the National Redress Scheme: final report*. The findings of this report show that while the National Redress Scheme was a significant achievement requiring cooperation between Queensland, the Commonwealth and other States and Territories more work is required to ensure the Scheme operates in a way that is accessible, survivor focussed and trauma-informed.

Ms Kruk made a number of recommendations for reforms to the scheme, including allowing applicants who are elderly, terminally ill or facing other life crises to receive advance payments before their claims are assessed and the elimination of the requirement for all applications to be accompanied with statutory declarations, among many other changes.

The Queensland Government continues to work closely with the Commonwealth and State and Territory peers on the recommendations from Ms Kruk's review. All recommendations are being considered and options for their implementation are being explored.

The Queensland Government has committed, as recommended by the Royal Commission, to annually report on Royal Commission implementation for five years.

I look forward to tabling the Queensland Government's Fourth Annual Report outlining our 2021 progress in due course.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 3

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how DCYJMA works with young Queenslanders in out-of-home care to ensure they have access to the same opportunities and life outcomes as other Queensland children and young people?

#### ANSWER

It is critical that children and young people in care have access to the same opportunities and life outcomes as other Queensland children and young people.

Children in out-of-home care can struggle more than those who have not been in care as the life experiences that led to them being in care can lead to an increased risk of poor health outcomes, poor employment outcomes, financial disadvantage, and homelessness.

For this reason, it is vital these children and young people receive as much care and tailored support as is possible, and needed, to improve life outcomes.

When a child enters care, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) works closely with the child and their family, their community, their carers, and other relevant agencies, to develop the best plan for the child. This is centred around maintaining connections with family, community, culture and country.

This also includes supporting key transitions, like the transition to adulthood; supporting positive engagement with education and good health and helping them to work through the experiences that have led them to coming into care.

DCYJMA allocates funding each year to the Department of Education (DoE) to provide additional support to children in out of home care including additional literacy and numeracy support, learning equipment and teacher aide time. The Department will fund DoE \$8.6 million in 2021-22 to provide Education Support Plans.

Across the state, DCYJMA is investing in initiatives designed to support children in care to recover from adversity and achieve the same outcomes as other children.

DCYJMA has partnered with Children's Health Queensland to implement Navigate Your Health, which offers children and young people in Brisbane, Logan and Cairns access to comprehensive health assessments and health management plans.

DCYJMA is helping GPs and other health providers to understand how best to support the needs of children in care through communities of practice facilitated through the Strengthening Health Assessment Pathways initiative, in partnership with Primary Health Networks. This includes pathways for the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

DCYJMA supports the trauma and mental health needs of children in care through specialised Evolve Therapeutic Services teams across the state, in partnership with Queensland Health.

Transitioning to adulthood is a critical time in any young person's life. While many Queensland children get to stay at home long after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the department knows this experience is very different for children in care. In acknowledgement of this, we have extended carer payments to support young people in foster care for another year, to help with stability through this uncertain stage of life.

The Next Step Plus program provides support to young people from 15 to 25 years who are in care or who have left care. This program provides support with housing and accommodation, managing finances, training and jobs, relationship support and legal advice.

For young people with a disability, who are struggling with their mental health or have other more complex needs, the Transition and Post Care Support Program provides additional support. Transition Officers across the state provide direct support to young people in care up to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, assisting them to transition to other supports.

There is always more to be done and DCYJMA continues to listen to young people and those with a care experience to improve the system.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 4

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Queensland Government is actively supporting vulnerable families, children and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic?

#### ANSWER

The Queensland Government is strongly committed to supporting families early, when difficulties arise. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs' COVID-19 response has continued to hold the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people, families and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds as the top priority.

The economic and social impacts of COVID-19 have resulted in increased demand for the Queensland Government to support vulnerable children, young people and families. In response, we have continued to invest in early intervention and prevention services so that families can access the right service, at the right time.

Free services available for families include:

- Family and Child Connect – local, community-based services that link families to the services that will best meet their needs.
- Intensive Family Support – services which build the capacity of families to nurture, protect and keep their children safe where there are multiple and complex needs that have to be met.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services – community-controlled family support services offering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families a diverse range of services to build families' capacity to safely care for and nurture their children.

In response to COVID-19 pressures on families, and the increasing incidence of domestic and family violence (DFV), more than \$2 million in short-term funding was provided to Family and Child Connect and Intensive Family Support Services commencing from 1 June 2020 to 30 June 2021. This has allowed services state-wide to flexibly use brokerage funds to respond to the support needs of families impacted by DFV, prioritising victim safety. A further \$2.7 million was provided to Family Wellbeing Services.

By providing appropriate referral pathways across a continuum of services tailored to the needs of families, the government has clearly demonstrated its commitment to supporting families earlier with funding and strong action. Additionally, the department worked closely with other key agencies regarding school attendance for vulnerable children and supported the Department of Education with increasing their knowledge and confidence in accessing secondary family support services.

To support foster and kinship carers during COVID-19, ongoing communication linking carers to COVID-19 information and carer-specific resources were developed and made available on the department's website. Thirty-nine repurposed departmental iPads with an approximate value of \$3400 were donated to Queensland Foster and Kinship Care to provide to foster carers to facilitate their communication with the department. The Foster and Kinship Carer Support Line was also expanded to be a 24-hour service.

In addition, temporary changes were made to the payment of carer allowances for foster and kinship carers who may be hospitalised and/or temporarily unable to continue in their caring role due to COVID-19, allowing them to continue receiving financial support.

CALD communities have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 due to a range of factors, including limited English; reliance on strong family networks for social support; and the prevalence of casual and informal employment. The Queensland Government acted swiftly to ensure people from CALD backgrounds were supported through the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery. Local engagement with known community leaders, organisations and response and recovery agencies has been critical to the success of health and support messaging.

*A COVID-19 Engagement Plan for CALD Communities* was developed with sector meetings activated, to relay the latest health advice, and activate a rapid response to community issues. Operational leads in Queensland Health, the Queensland Police Service and Community Recovery have incorporated coordinated engagement with CALD communities into their response planning. *A COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship* was developed in collaboration with faith communities, Griffith University and Queensland Health, to support people of faith maintain their spiritual and mental health during COVID-19.

The department continues to work to support the Queensland Government's *Unite and Recover – Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan*, particularly the long-term objective of safeguarding people's health and jobs by keeping Queensland pandemic-ready.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 5

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise what action is being taken by DCYJMA to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the child protection and youth justice systems?

#### ANSWER

While the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in Queensland live safely at home in community and culture, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are disproportionately represented in the child protection and youth justice systems.

The Palaszczuk Government recognised that the existing reform program laid out by the 2013 Carmody Inquiry would not be enough to reduce the disproportionate representation of First Nations families and children in the child protection system.

Not only did the Palaszczuk Government develop the 20 year *Our Way: a generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and their Families* (Our Way) it also shifted planned investment in family support to establish 33 community controlled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services across the State to provide culturally responsive child and family support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families when needed.

The Our Way strategy and its seven action plans set the strategic foundations to eliminating the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system within a generation.

The Queensland First Children and Families Board, established in 2018, provides strong cultural leadership, strategic oversight and advice and guidance to the department on the implementation of the Our Way strategy and supporting action plans.

To date, the Queensland Government has committed \$162.8 million for *Changing Tracks: An action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017-2019* and an additional \$14.6 million over the four years, from 2019-2020, for *Changing Tracks: An action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2020-2022* (Changing Tracks second action plan).

The Changing Tracks second action plan maintains our long-term commitment to set the foundations for change across the child protection system and build on the prevention and early intervention approach of *Supporting Families Changing Futures: Advancing Queensland's Child Protection and Family Support* reforms.

An independent evaluation, which examines achievements and identifies the impacts and outcomes achieved through the delivery of the Our Way strategy and Changing Tracks action plans, is underway. The evaluation report will be finalised in the second half of 2022.

While the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland's child protection system remains high, it is low compared to most other jurisdictions. For the fourth consecutive quarter, the proportion of children in care who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander has remained relatively stable (43 per cent), a reversal of the pre-reform (2012-13) trend of growing disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. Latest March 2021 data shows that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children comprised 43.6 per cent of all children in out-of-home care.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the proportion of children in home-based care placed with kin, has increased by 2.4 percentage points compared to this time last year to 49.5 per cent. Compared to pre-reform (2012-13) this is up 10.4 percentage points from 39.1 per cent.

Overall, Queensland's reforms to date have helped keep the rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system lower than most other jurisdictions. Based on the latest published data in the 2019-20 Child Protection Australia report:

- the rate of Indigenous children receiving child protection services in Queensland was 128.8 per 1,000 children in 2019-20, which was below the national average of 165.8 and the second lowest of all jurisdictions (TAS was lower)
- the rate of Indigenous children who were the subject of substantiations in Queensland was 24.8 per 1,000 children at 30 June 2020, which was below the national average of 43.0 and the third lowest of all jurisdictions (TAS and the ACT were lower)
- the rate of Indigenous children subject to care and protection orders in Queensland was 51.8 per 1,000 children at 30 June 2020, which was below the national average of 69.7 and the third lowest of all jurisdictions (the NT and TAS were lower)
- the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care in Queensland was 40.4 per 1,000 children at 30 June 2020, which was below the national average of 56.3 and the third lowest of all jurisdictions (TAS and the NT were lower).

Queensland leads the nation in the proportion of expenditure provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations for family support (20.64 per cent of expenditure in 2020-21) and intensive family support services (35.94 per cent of expenditure in 2020-21). Key Queensland reforms include:

- Investment of \$42 million per annum for Family Wellbeing Services, with a focus on youth justice and domestic and family violence (DFV), delivered in 33 locations by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to support families to care for and nurture their children.
- Funding of \$14 million per annum for the Family Participation Program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to participate in key decisions that affect them across the child protection system.
- Implemented delegated authority in two locations in Central Queensland to delegate the powers and functions of the CEO for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, to the CEO of an Indigenous community-controlled entity, to provide a more culturally appropriate response and outcome for Indigenous children and families.
- Enhanced efforts to identify kin for children unable to live with their parents, including partnering with QATSICPP to develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kinship program to maximise placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with family and/or kin.

- The full implementation of:
  - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in practice, and the development of policy, programs and service systems across the department, and
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family led decision making to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are actively engaged in all key decision about them across the child protection system.

The Our Way strategy supports the *Youth Justice Strategy, Working Together, Changing the Story 2019-2023*. This strategy outlines the Queensland Government commitment to engaging more with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community organisations providing cultural programs to respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who are committing offences.

The department has an established Cultural Capability Team which works with all youth justice staff to apply a cultural lens to all areas of our work. This includes developing a diversely skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, as well as culturally competent non-indigenous staff.

The Cultural Capability Team works closely with the Youth Justice First Nations Action Board (YJFNAB), a representative body of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from across the state. The YJFNAB adds a local layer of expertise to the cultural lens provided by the Cultural Unit.

Last year, the department worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to design and commence the On Country Program in Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa. The service provides young people with an opportunity to self-reflect on their offending behaviour through cultural interventions, connections, spiritual healing, and trauma informed practice while on country and support longer term to reconnect with education, family, and employment opportunities.

Culture is an important protective factor in preventing adverse life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and the On Country program is an important step in enabling self-determination. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are in control of designing and delivering real and lasting solutions to stop young people offending.

Additionally, the Department is trialling the use of Family Led Decision-Making where children are involved in the youth justice system. This process enhances the voice of families in decision making and case planning to prevent re-offending. The process of Family Led Decision-Making respects the knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in terms of the best solutions for their young people. This is an innovative youth justice practice based on the principle of practical self-determination.

In 2019, the department also released *Supporting Families, Changing Futures 2019–2023 The Queensland Government’s Plan for helping children, young people, parents and families experiencing vulnerability*. This strategy outlines our focus for this five year period, including strengthening and enhancing family support, continued and concerted focus to begin to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care and actively looking at ways we can improve long term outcomes for children and young people in care.

Queensland is currently working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories on the development of the successor plan to *Protecting Children is Everyone’s Business National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009–2020*. All jurisdictions are committed to a plan that supports and aligns with the Closing the Gap targets, including to reduce disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (0-17) in out-of-home care by 45 per cent, and reduce the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17 years) in detention by at least 30 per cent by 2031.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 6

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise what proportion of Child Safety and Youth Justice staff are employed in frontline roles?

#### ANSWER

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs supports children, young people and their families to be safe and to thrive in culture and communities. Frontline roles across the department deliver services directly to the community. These may include child safety officers, child safety support officers, senior child safety officers, cultural practice advisors and family group meeting convenors, detention youth workers, section supervisors, shift supervisors, structured day coordinators, cultural liaison officers and visits coordinators.

Frontline Support roles provide essential support enabling the effective development and delivery of frontline services, programs and outcomes. These may include administration officers, business officers, contract officers and principal program officers.

As at 18 June 2021, **88.38** per cent FTE of all departmental staff were employed in Frontline and Frontline Support roles.

For Child and Family Services, **84.80** per cent FTE of staff were employed as Frontline or Frontline Support.

For Youth Justice Services, **95.76** per cent of FTE staff were employed as Frontline or Frontline Support.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 7

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise about trends in youth crime in Queensland?

#### ANSWER

The Queensland Government is addressing youth crime and keeping communities safe.

The *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023* and the Queensland Government's Five Point Plan and the Targeting Serious Repeat Offender work provides the framework for how the Palaszczuk Government is reducing youth offending and keeping communities safe.

This framework is supported by significant investment of over half a billion dollars and is evidence-based and informed by community members and experts. It aims to strengthen prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation responses to youth crime in Queensland and has public safety and community confidence as its foundations.

Evidence shows these reforms and investment are working. Fewer young people are offending – there has been a 12 per cent reduction in 10 to 17-year-old offenders with a proven offence in the 12 months ending 31 March 2021 compared to the 12 months ending 31 March 2020, and a 27 per cent decrease when compared to the year ending March 2019.

It should be noted that, from 12 February 2018, 17-year-old offenders were treated as juvenile offenders and subsequently included in Youth Justice reporting. As such, data is only directly comparable from the year ending 31 March 2019 onwards.

While we know that 43 per cent of young people do not return to the youth justice system after their first finalised court appearance, we also know that Restorative Justice conferences are working to successfully reduce re-offending rates; 77 per cent of young people who went through restorative justice either did not reoffend or decreased the magnitude of reoffending within six months after completion of their conference. Under the Palaszczuk Government's approach, there has been a 23 per cent increase in the number of Restorative Justice conferences held in the 12 months ending 31 March 2021 compared to the 12 months ending 31 March 2020, and a 30 per cent increase when compared to the year ending March 2019.

While the number of young offenders in Queensland is decreasing, we know that those offending can have complex needs and some are committing more offences. Young people in the youth justice system often have complex issues, including substance abuse, mental health issues, behavioural disorders, disability and disengagement from education. The latest Youth Justice census results show that 55 per cent of young offenders are disengaged from education, employment and/or training, 21 per cent have used Ice or other methamphetamines, 30 per cent had parents who had been held in adult custody and 60 per cent had experienced or been impacted by domestic and family violence.

It is why the strategy is also focused on diverting young people from offending and reoffending and providing opportunities for these young people to turn their lives around and change their stories. It is why we invest in support services. And this approach is working – 67 per cent of all Transition to Success participants who completed a course did not offend or reoffend within 12 months of completing their course.

We know there is still more to be done to address the complexities of young people in contact with the youth justice system and in particular the 10 per cent of young people who are serious repeat offenders responsible for 47 per cent of all proven offences.

In 2021, the Queensland Government amended the *Youth Justice Act 1992* to strengthen accountability for serious repeat offending, including a trial of electronic monitoring devices and a presumption against bail for high risk repeat offenders. These reforms are supported by new investment of \$98.4 million in the 2021-22 State Budget, including \$38.3 million to target serious repeat offenders and implement new measures to improve community safety and \$60.1 million in existing programs showing positive results to sustain the gains already achieved in reducing youth offending.

The Queensland Government's approach to serious repeat offenders is being overseen by a dedicated Youth Crime Taskforce. The reforms will be reviewed over the next six months to ensure our investment is working to reduce offending. The government is committed to evidence-based interventions to reduce youth offending, and ongoing review, and will continue to closely monitor trends in youth crime in Queensland.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 8

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise what investments have been made to programs and infrastructure in youth justice under the Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-23?

#### ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government has invested over half a billion dollars in Queensland's youth justice system to reduce offending since 17-year olds transitioned to the youth justice system in 2017. This investment has provided additional capacity in existing youth detention centres, a new 32-bed youth detention centre, more frontline staff, and more programs for the youth justice system to reduce offending.

The *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-23* (the Youth Justice Strategy) is a framework for this investment, to strengthening the prevention, early intervention, and rehabilitation response to youth crime in Queensland.

The headline initiatives under the Youth Justice Strategy include:

- \$26.8 million in 2017-2023 to continue the Townsville Community Youth Response, including the High-Risk Youth Court, the Burragah Bridging to Flexi School program, after-hours diversionary services and cultural mentoring.
- \$15 million in 2019-2023 to implement new Community Youth Responses in Brisbane/Logan, Ipswich, and Cairns.
- \$5.6 million in 2019-23 with \$1.4 million recurrently for Specialist Multi-Agency Response Teams to coordinate support, assess and refer young people to get the help they need to prevent further offending in Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, Gold Coast, Ipswich, Logan, Caboolture and Mount Isa.
- \$27 million to build 16 more beds at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre – the 16 beds became operational in May 2020, and a further \$150 million for construction of the new 32 bed West Moreton Youth Detention Centre near the existing Brisbane Youth Detention Centre which became operational in December 2020.
- \$16.1 million in 2019-25 to continue existing Conditional Bail programs to reduce offending by proactively working with young people during their bail period to support bail compliance.
- \$1.3 million in 2019-22 to extend the 'Navigate Your Health' initiative, a joint, evidence-based Department of Child Safety, Youth Justice, Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) and Queensland Health project connecting young people to vital health services and Nurse Navigators. Navigate Your Health ensures young people can address the physical and mental health issues that influence their offending.
- \$3.3 million since 2018-22 for a Family-led Decision Making (FLDM) trial led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and operating in Logan/Redlands; Brisbane North; Cairns, and Toowoomba. Program development support is from the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Projection Peak. An independent evaluation has shown that FLDM can achieve a positive environment for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with complex needs who require support from multiple service providers.

- \$3.43 million in 2019-22 to deliver the Mount Isa Transitional Hub to provide an integrated and culturally appropriate safe place outside of standard business hours to divert young people at risk of offending. The hub offers the opportunity to coordinate across multiple services including Queensland Police Service (QPS) and the Mount Isa Watch house. The Hub has shown positive results with a 11 per cent decrease in the number of proven offences by 10-17-year olds in Mount Isa in the 12 months to 31 March 2021, and an 18 per cent decrease in the number of young people with at least one proven offence over the same period.

Additional reforms to support the Youth Justice Strategy implemented in the years since its release include:

- \$26.1 million since 2019-22 in the Co-responder model, a joint initiative between DCYJMA and QPS. This initiative responds to serious repeat offenders and supports the Electronic Monitoring trial and is currently operational in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Moreton, Logan, Mackay, Brisbane North, and the Gold Coast. The Co-responder Model operates after-hours to reduce youth crime and reoffending. The mobile teams keep their communities safe by visiting ongoing and emerging places of need in their communities and de-escalate situations where groups of young people congregate and impact public safety. In the first seven months of the program, Co-responder teams engaged young people over 6,000 times in patrol encounters, home visits, follow-up checks, street checks, and bail compliance checks.
- \$5.7 million over four years to deliver the On-Country Program which works with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Townsville, Cairns and Mount Isa. On Country is culture-based education and rehabilitation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system.
- \$2 million to empower local communities and community-based organisations to develop local community-based solutions.
- \$38.3 million targeted towards repeat offenders and implementing new and enhanced measures to improve community safety, including extended night and weekend Conditional Bail and Bail Support supervision and programs.
- \$60.1 million over four years for the continuation of existing programs and services under the Youth Justice Strategy that are showing positive results.

Although there is no quick fix for youth offending, initiatives and investment under the Youth Justice Strategy are working. For the 12 months to 31 March 2021, there has been a 12 per cent decrease in the number of young people with a proven offence.

Most young people in contact with the youth justice system do not reoffend after a first offence. There is however a core group of serious repeat offenders who continue to offend and put themselves and the community at risk. Around 10 per cent of young offenders commit 47 per cent of offences.

The Palaszczuk Government will continue to invest in the youth justice system to ensure gains in reducing youth offending are sustained. Because community safety is paramount and community confidence essential.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 9

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister provide an update on the government's investment in addressing the 10 per cent of young offenders committing almost 50 per cent of offences?

#### ANSWER

Since 2015, the Queensland Government has invested more than half a billion dollars in youth justice programs, services and infrastructure to support the youth justice system.

In 2021-22, the Queensland Government is investing a further \$98.4 million to continue the fight against youth crime, with a focus on serious repeat offenders - the 10 per cent of youth offenders who commit 47 per cent of all youth crime.

This new funding package includes \$38.3 million to target serious repeat offenders and implement new measures to improve community safety, and \$60.1 investment in existing programs showing positive results in reducing youth offending.

On 30 April 2021, amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 1992* came into effect to strengthen accountability for serious repeat youth offenders. These new laws allow for a trial of electronic monitoring for high-risk repeat offenders; create a presumption against bail for serious repeat offenders who commit a crime while on bail; and give Courts the ability to seek assurances from parents, guardians or others before an offender is released.

Assistant Police Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon and Mr Michael Drane, Senior Executive Director, Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs are co-leading a Youth Crime Taskforce to implement the new measures. The work of the Taskforce is already underway with:

- the commencement of the electronic monitoring trial in five locations across Queensland.
- an expansion of the joint Police and Youth Justice Co-responder teams to north Brisbane and the Gold Coast.
- an increase in the capacity of the Conditional Bail Program to provide more frontline workers to intensively monitor high-risk repeat offenders and give enhanced after-hours capacity to stabilise these young offenders.
- the final stages of the procurement of intensive support to families of serious repeat offenders and increased services to young people on bail through the Intensive Bail Support Program, to be delivered in partnership with non-government organisations.
- the provision of extra frontline Youth Justice Staff to provide after-hours; and
- an increase in the capacity of Child Safety frontline workers to attend court where a young person is engaged with Child Safety.

In 2021-22, an additional magistrate and legal advocacy resources will also be implemented.

Mr Bob Atkinson AO, APM is also being engaged to undertake a six-month review of the youth justice reforms targeting serious repeat offenders. The review will examine the implementation and utilisation of the legislation and programs.

The government is committed to evidence-based interventions to reduce youth offending, and ongoing review, and will continue to closely monitor trends in youth crime in Queensland.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 10

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how Multicultural Affairs is working towards creating an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland?

#### ANSWER

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs provides leadership across Queensland Government agencies to realise the vision set out in the *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* (the Act), for an inclusive, harmonious and united community, with opportunities for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to participate in all aspects of life in our state.

Among other provisions, the Act sets out requirements for a Queensland Government Multicultural Policy and Action Plan.

The *Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2019–20 to 2021–22*, is the second plan required under the Act and builds on outcomes achieved under the *Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2016–17 to 2018–19* and features 33 new or extended actions, including four significant whole-of-Government actions:

- commit to increasing all forms of diversity on Queensland Government boards
- promote the Multicultural Queensland Charter to Government agencies and consider its principles when developing policies or providing services
- sign up and participate in the Australian Human Rights Commission *Racism. It stops with me* campaign
- increase cultural understanding and capacity of staff by providing access to events, training and development opportunities.

The department works with Government agencies ensuring support to complex and significant issues impacting culturally and linguistically diverse communities is met. This includes working to embed inclusive engagement practices into disaster management protocols, including critical ongoing work to support COVID-19 response and recovery, developing inclusive practices to facilitate reach into diverse communities by increasing access to significant training, employment and small business support opportunities offered by the Queensland Government.

The department is also leading initiatives, working with Welcoming Cities and local councils involved in Regional Partnerships Projects in south west Queensland, that aims to strengthen our regions and work towards inclusive growth through connecting people to regional opportunities, increasing the accessibility of local services and fostering positive relationships between newcomers and existing residents.

The department provides significant funding to help build a more inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland:

- \$2 million annual investment in the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program for events and projects
- \$2.42 million annual investment in the Community Action for a Multicultural Society program
- \$3.5 million commitment to establish a Holocaust Museum and Education Centre in Queensland.

The Queensland Government has also committed \$8.3 million in funding for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance (ASRA) program from 2021-22 through to 2024-25. This is in addition to the \$4.7 million committed to ASRA since 2017-18.

The statewide ASRA program provides financial and material aid, case management and coordination support, including employment assistance, to vulnerable people seeking asylum and people with temporary protection visas residing in Queensland.

One of the ways that the department seeks to engage the broad Queensland community in contributing to a more inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland is through Multicultural Queensland Month, held in August each year.

This year, under the theme “inclusion in action” Multicultural Queensland Month activities will include a series of webinars presented by the Griffith University MATE program, including topics around workplace diversity and inclusion, and racism prevention; and the announcement of Multicultural Queensland Award winners. The awards presentation will occur later this year, delayed due to the recent COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

There are people from all backgrounds contributing to Queensland. Together we can build on the many things Queenslanders are already doing to make their communities more welcoming and inclusive. There is always more that can be done to ensure every Queenslanders feels they belong and has equitable access to the education, health, work and social opportunities this state can offer. When we all connect and contribute, we all help strengthen Queensland.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 11

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SUPPORT COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to the transition of 17-year-old offenders into youth detention – Will the Minister advise the total cost to date broken down by each measure or project?

#### ANSWER

The Queensland Government transitioned 17-year-old youth offenders to the youth justice system to align with the approach of all other states and territories in Australia and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to recognise the developmental needs of children and young people.

The *Youth Justice and Other Legislation (Inclusion of 17-year-old Persons) Amendment Act 2016* commenced on 12 February 2018 and was supported by additional investment to implement new programs and services required for the inclusion of 17-year-olds.

Expenditure on these new initiatives relating to youth detention over four years included:

- \$27.5M for capital works and additional operational capacity for Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and Brisbane Youth Detention Centre to accommodate 17-year-old offenders and other minor capital works, including increased bed capacity, fencing, and fire and safety upgrades;
- \$39.7M to recruit new frontline staff for Youth Detention Centres and Youth Justice Service Centres to support the increased demand on services;

Funding was also provided to other criminal justice agencies – the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) and the Queensland Police Service (QPS), as well as Queensland Health (QH) to support the transition of 17-year-olds into youth detention. Any questions pertaining to another agency should be directed to the responsible Minister.

Since their transition, additional attention has been paid to the unique and more adult needs of 17-year-olds when serviced in the community and in detention. For example, 17-year-old people require different and more intensive support as they are more likely to be parents or in intimate relationships; have more complex and longer histories of substance use; and are more likely to require vocational training and employment-focussed interventions than younger cohorts.

The Queensland Government continues to strengthen Queensland's youth justice system with over \$550M invested to date, and an evidence-based framework, *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-23*, to guide actions and investment.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 12

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to accommodation of young people while they are on remand or supervised bail accommodation – Will the Minister advise (a) the number and location of each venue, (b) the capital cost of each venue and (c) the ongoing service costs of each venue?

#### ANSWER

##### Accommodation of young people on remand:

- (a) There are currently three Youth Detention Centres operating in Queensland which accommodate young people on remand:
1. Cleveland Youth Detention Centre located in Townsville
  2. Brisbane Youth Detention Centre located in Wacol
  3. West Moreton Youth Detention Centre located in Wacol
- (b) The capital cost for each venue:
1. Cleveland Youth Detention Centre located in Townsville - \$248.712 million
  2. Brisbane Youth Detention Centre - \$170.025 million
  3. West Moreton Youth Detention Centre is in the final stages of completion. \$150 million was committed for the construction of this centre.
- (c) The estimated ongoing services costs for each venue are:
1. Cleveland Youth Detention Centre located in Townsville - \$43.377 million
  2. Brisbane Youth Detention Centre –\$36.665 million
  3. West Moreton Youth Detention Centre – \$16.903 million

Supervised Community Accommodation ceased as at 31 January 2021, as such there are no ongoing Supervised Community Accommodation related service costs for the properties.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 13

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to the Queensland Youth Strategy action schedule: Will the Minister advise for each action are they (a) on schedule/delivered, (b) behind schedule/undelivered or (c) discontinued/ unsuccessful?

#### ANSWER

The *Queensland Youth Strategy: Building young Queenslanders for a better future* falls within the ministerial responsibilities of the Honourable Meaghan Scanlon MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 14

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SUPPORT COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to page 5 of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs SDS, which relates to providing services to support the safety, belonging and wellbeing of children – Will the Minister advise, between 2018 and 2021 to date (a) the total number of children subject to a child protection order and (b) of those, the total number who were (i) adopted under the Adoption Act 2009 (broken down by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) or (ii) placed on permanent care orders (broken down by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)?

#### ANSWER

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs' paramount consideration when determining the appropriate care arrangements for a child supported in the child protection system is their safety, wellbeing and best interests.

Where possible, safely reunifying children with their parents and returning them to an environment where they can be loved and nurtured, is the ultimate goal. However, where children cannot safely live with their parents, the decision about who will care for them throughout their childhood is critical.

The department has finalised a Permanency Strategy and Implementation Roadmap to strengthen practice and embed legislative changes to improve permanency through the *Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017*.

The development of the strategy was informed by consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders and includes initiatives that drive cultural change and improved practice in permanency planning and will inform the development of future policy positions when considering permanency options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

On 7 April 2021, the *Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021* was passed to enhance the approach to achieving permanency for children in out-of-home care. It clarified that adoption is an option to be considered as part of a suite of long-term options for achieving permanency and clarified the importance of alternative legal permanency options for children subject to a Child Protection Order granting long-term guardianship to the Chief Executive.

The department has also undertaken a review of permanency arrangements for children under the age of three in out-of-home care. The findings of this review have highlighted a need to focus on finding family members, kin carers, who may be able to care for these children, and concurrent case planning so that if reunification to parents is not possible, a plan for alternative permanency has been developed.

When discussing permanency, it is important to be clear that no single type of order is going to be the most suitable for every child. Long Term Guardianship Orders, either to the Chief Executive or to Family or Other, remain the most utilised form of permanency for children and young people. As at 31 March 2021 There are 7,121 children and young people who are supported in these types of permanency arrangement.

To strengthen the focus on positive long-term outcomes for children in the child protection system, on 29 October 2018, the final stage of amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999* from the *Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017* commenced. These amendments included new permanency principles for ensuring a child's best interests are served, requiring all case plans to include goals and actions for achieving permanency and introducing a permanent care order as a new type of child protection order. Since that date, the number of children and young people on permanent care orders continues to grow, from 8 orders at 30 June 2019, to 35 at 31 March 2020, to 73 at 31 March 2021.

With regard to adoption in Queensland, adoption is a consent-based process and done in close consultation with parents. The process includes extensive counselling with the child's parents, and in all decisions the wellbeing and interests of the child, throughout their life, are paramount.

Between 1 January 2018 and end of March 2021 (the latest validated data period):

- (a) 16,192 children have been subject to a child protection order:
- (b) (i) of the 16,192 children subject to a child protection order, four children have been adopted under the *Adoption Act 2009*. None of these children identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
  - (ii) 73 children have been placed with carers under permanent care orders, of these 12 identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 15

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to page 5 of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs SDS, which relates to providing services to support the safety, belonging and wellbeing of children – Will the Minister advise, between 2020/21 and 2021/22 to date, (a) the number of times the Queensland Police Service made a request for information, (b) the (i) shortest, (ii) median and (iii) longest time taken to provide information to police, (c) the total number of documents containing redactions that were sent to the QPS and (d) the number of search warrants executed on the department?

#### ANSWER

Information exchange with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) is a frequent, daily and normal part of the business of the department across the state. This includes providing relevant information for cases subject to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) team discussions and providing relevant information to enable location of missing young people, the conduct and planning of investigation and assessments and safety planning.

QPS requests to the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs come through a number of avenues, including during the day-to-day work that is undertaken by child safety service centre staff. The Police Self Service of Document Retrieval portal includes information requests made under sections 159N and 95 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* (CPA).

Section 188E of the CPA is a provision that gives the Police Commissioner the ability to seek information from the Director-General, by written notice, about a deceased child to assist with QPS investigations.

There were five notices received during 2020-21 and the department has not received any notices in 2021-22 to date. All notices were responded to within 24 hours of receipt and only unredacted materials were provided in response to the notices.

The department receives search warrants from the QPS in circumstances where the information exchange is not otherwise provided for in the CPA, for example in relation to the criminal investigation of historical sex offences.

In 2020-21 the department received 72 search warrants and has received eight search warrants in 2021-22 to date.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 16

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to page 4 of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs SDS, which relates to staffing, will the Minister advise, between 2019/20 to 2021/22 to date, (a) the median caseload for FTE child safety officers across the state per month (reported separately per year and month), (b) total number of FTE child safety officers working per day between Monday Sunday (reported separately per day) and (c) average hours per day worked by child safety officers across the state between Monday Sunday (reported separately per day)?

#### ANSWER

- a) Average caseload data is reported quarterly by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. Data provided is for the quarters 30 June 2019 to 31 March 2021, which is the latest available. For comparison purposes caseload data as at 30 June 2014 is also provided.

As at 31 March 2021 the statewide average caseload was 18.1. This is the same result compared to the same period since last year. By comparison, the statewide average caseload as at 30 June 2014 was 20.3.

As at 31 March 2021, the median case load figure was also 18.1.

Case management responsibilities can differ depending on the child, their personal needs, their educational needs, their health, their location, their connection to culture, and the type of guardianship situation.

#### **Caseloads for child safety officers (CSOs) working with children in need of protection who require ongoing intervention**

<b>Ongoing Intervention</b>	<b>Average caseload</b>	<b>Median caseload</b>
As at 30 June 2014	20.3	20.4
As at 30 June 2019	17.2	16.9
As at 30 September 2019	17.5	17.3
As at 31 December 2019	17.8	17.6
As at 31 March 2020	18.1	18.5
As at 30 June 2020	18.1	17.8
As at 30 September 2020	18.7	18.7
As at 31 December 2020	18.2	18.4
As at 31 March 2021	18.1	18.1

- b) The total number of FTE CSOs is reported fortnightly per pay period; FTE data is not captured per day. Therefore, the average total number of FTE CSOs (excluding Child Safety After Hours Service Centre employees) per fortnight is provided for the pay periods ending 18 December 2020 to 18 June 2021. 1136.16 FTE.

- c) From the pay period ending 3 July 2020 to the pay period ending 11 June 2021, the average hours (including overtime) worked per day by CSOs working on that day (excluding Child Safety After Hours Service Centre employees) was:

Monday	7.63 hrs
Tuesday	7.65 hrs
Wednesday	7.64 hrs
Thursday	7.63 hrs
Friday	7.56 hrs
Saturday	2.72 hrs
Sunday	4.00 hrs

As is the common practice across the public service, CSOs accumulate Accrued Time Leave (ATL – more commonly known as flex). Similarly, time off in lieu (TOIL) is accrued when work is carried out that exceeds 9.5 hours a day, or is performed outside the ordinary spread of hours (i.e. Monday to Friday, 6am to 6pm in regions, or 6am to 7pm in the Brisbane CBD). Paid overtime in Child Safety Service Centres is approved for unplanned emergent work, such as Investigation and Assessment and/or urgent placement requirements.

The table above does not include Child Safety After Hours Service Centre employees, a highly experienced team of Child Safety Officers that operate outside of business hours from 5.00pm to 9.00am Monday to Friday, and 24 hours on public holidays and weekends, to ensure coverage of the 24/7 Child Safety system.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 17

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to page 1 of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs SDS, which refers to supporting and empowering Queenslanders from culturally diverse backgrounds to build community connectedness Will the Minister advise of (a) the population of (i) asylum seekers (holders of temporary protection visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas) and (ii) refugees (holders of protection visas) living in each Queensland region and (b) specific programs and initiatives to help refugees and asylum seekers seek and maintain employment, including (i) name of program, (ii) duration of program and (iii) region located and (iv) cost?

#### ANSWER

The Federal Government is responsible for immigration, including policy and border control, visa grants and conditions, and settlement support programs.

Questions about the population of people seeking asylum and refugees living in each Queensland region falls under the portfolio responsibility of the Honourable Karen Andrews MP, Minister for Home Affairs and would be best directed to Minister Andrews.

The Queensland Government remains committed to delivering inclusive support to all people in Queensland and has continued to advocate to the Federal Government in relation to vulnerable refugees and people seeking asylum.

The Queensland Government announced \$8.3 million in funding for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance (ASRA) program from 2021-22 to 2024-25. This is in addition to the \$4.7 million committed by the Queensland Government to the ASRA program since 2017-18.

The ASRA program is a statewide program that provides financial and material aid, case management and coordination support, including employment assistance, to vulnerable people seeking asylum and people with temporary protection visas or no visa residing in Queensland.

Examples of employment assistance facilitated through the ASRA program include employment assistance sessions; vocational training; paid or unpaid work experience (including volunteering and workplace training); skills development training; provision of weekly employment related newsletters; and employment liaison.

My department works closely with the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, however questions about other Queensland Government programs and initiatives to help refugees and people seeking asylum to seek and maintain employment falls under the portfolio responsibility of the Honourable Dianne Farmer MP, Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development and would be best directed to Minister Farmer.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 18

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to the 26 alleged incidents in youth detention centres which included actions from staff that were potentially incompatible with human rights from 1 July - 12 November 2020, referred to in the Department's Final Annual Report Will the Minister advise (a) how many of the alleged instances related to (i) Access to food and water, (ii) Access to fresh air, (iii) Use of seclusion, (iv) Children being abused or unfairly punished, (v) Access to education, (vi) Children being prevented from staying connected with their culture or religion (including speaking their own language) and (vii) Children being prevented from accessing medical help, (b) for the alleged incidents resolved through local management action, what specific actions were taken against the responsible employee and to prevent further breaches, (c) what is the outcome of the three alleged incidents which were still subject to ongoing investigation and (d) how many alleged breaches of human rights have there been in youth detention centres since 12 November 2020 and can the Department provide equivalent data for these?

#### ANSWER

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in its decision making and actions in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act).

The implementation of human rights is an ongoing and iterative process. To help embed a human rights culture and promote a dialogue about human rights, consistent with the objectives of the Act, staff are encouraged to: identify actions and decisions that engage human rights, including whether those rights have been limited or protected; consider the balance between limitations and protections; in circumstances where rights have been limited, consider whether those limitations are reasonable and justified; and through dialogue and shared learning identify opportunities for improvement overtime.

The 26 alleged incidents in youth detention centres noted in the Department of Youth Justice Final Report 1 July – 12 November 2020 contained 29 allegations and potentially engaged 44 human rights.

(a) Of these 26 alleged instances:

- (i) 0 – Access to food and water
- (ii) 0 – Access to fresh air
- (iii) 0 – Use of seclusion
- (iv) 19 – Children being abused or unfairly punished
- (v) 0 – Access to education
- (vi) 0 – Children being prevented from staying connected with their culture or religion (including speaking their own language)
- (vii) 1 – Children being prevented from accessing medical help

- (b) Local management actions included staff being limited from working with specific young people, awareness raising and opportunities to reflect on the actions and their impact.
- (c) Two investigations have been finalised and have been assessed as unsubstantiated. Investigation regarding the other one alleged incident is ongoing.
- (d) No formal human rights complaints have been received in youth detention centres since 12 November 2020. Through the analysis of complaints received between 13 November 2020 and 30 June 2021 the department identified 67 alleged incidents in youth detention centres which included actions from staff that were potentially incompatible with human rights.

The alleged instances related to:

- (i) 1 – Access to food and water
- (ii) 0 – Access to fresh air
- (iii) 0 – Use of seclusion
- (iv) 49 – Children being abused or unfairly punished
- (v) 0 – Access to education
- (vi) 0 – Children being prevented from staying connected with their culture or religion (including speaking their own language)
- (vii) 4 – Children being prevented from accessing medical help

35 of these complaints have been resolved as Investigated and unsubstantiated, substantiated, referred or management action undertaken. 32 remain open.

## **2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING**

### **QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **No. 19**

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### **QUESTION**

With reference to juveniles detained in police watch houses in Queensland –

Will the Minister advise (a) how many distinct young persons aged 10-17 were detained in police watch houses from June 2019 to present (reported separately by month), (b) the total number of distinct young persons aged 10-17 detained in all watch houses across the state from November 2020 to date and how many of these children were subject to child protection orders, (c) the average daily number of children held in watch houses from June 2020 - June 2021 (reported separately by age), (d) how many distinct young persons were detained in police watch houses (reported separately by age and Indigenous status) from November 2020 to date for (i) less than 6 hours, (ii) one night (6-48 hours), (iii) 2-6 nights and (iv) more than 1 week and (e) how many instances of seclusion were used for young persons aged 10-17 in watch houses (reported by age and duration)?

#### **ANSWER**

Data on Queensland Police watchhouses is not generated by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. This question should be directed to the Honourable Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services.

## 2021 ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING

### QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### No. 20

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

#### QUESTION

With reference to the new laws targeting recidivist youth offenders, introduced under the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 Will the Minister advise (a) how many applications, successful and unsuccessful, have been made to have electronic monitoring devices fitted on juveniles as a condition of bail under section 52AA of the Youth Justice Act, (b) how many of these applications were made in relation to Indigenous young persons, (c) how many young people have been subject to the presumption against bail under section 48AF (reported separately by age, LGA and Indigenous status) and (d) will the results of the 6-month review of the new laws and their efficacy by Bob Atkinson (i) be reported publicly and (ii) include information on how many young people targeted under the laws were Indigenous, suffering from cognitive impairment, affected by substance misuse disorder, and subject to child protection orders?

#### ANSWER

- (a) Four (4) suitability assessments for electronic monitoring have been ordered by courts in Queensland to date. The assessments have been ordered for three (3) distinct young people:
- One young person was found was suitable for electronic monitoring although bail was refused on the basis the young person was an unacceptable risk of committing further offences, resulting in the young person being remanded in custody,
    - The same young person had a second suitability assessment ordered on a different occasion where he was found unsuitable for electronic monitoring. The young person was subsequently refused bail for the same reasons set out in the first application; and
  - Two young people were found to be unsuitable.
- (b) Of the young people that have had suitability assessments ordered by courts, all have identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- (c) This data is the responsibility of Queensland Police Services.
- (d) Mr Bob Atkinson AO APM will review and deliver advice about the progress of implementation and utilisation of legislation and programs targeting serious, repeat offenders. Mr Atkinson will consult widely and source data from Queensland Police Service, Queensland Corrective Services, Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs to inform his report.
- i. Mr Atkinson will deliver his report at the end of 2021, after which it will be considered by government.
  - ii. Mr Atkinson's report will examine the application of the new legislation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people as well as their involvement with supporting programs and services. Information about characteristics of the serious, repeat offender cohort will be considered closer to the end of the review having regard to confidentiality provisions in the *Youth Justice Act 1992* and issues raised during the review.