




Speech By
Hon. Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 30 August 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Justice

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.02 am): Since 1992 17-year-old prisoners are accommodated in adult custody. Special consideration is given to the management of 17-year-old prisoners within Queensland correctional centres, with meaningful activities and specialty interventions delivered by the non-government sector. As is the case for all prisoners, restraints and the use of force are used only when it has been deemed necessary and sufficient warnings have been given. The image used in media reports today shows correction officers applying a helmet. This is used to protect a prisoner from injuring themselves.

This government also takes the safety of our corrections officers seriously. Protective equipment is used in adult correctional facilities when the safety and security of prisoners and correctional officers are at risk. Importantly, the safety of our correctional officers comes first. This government does not tolerate the mistreatment of prisoners. Every complaint and suspicion of mistreatment is investigated. All complaints of assault against prisoners are referred to the police.

I am working with the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills on the issue of 17-year-olds in adult prisons. I am advised operational procedures are in place to ensure 17-year-old prisoners are kept safe and close to any family members. Community visitors from the Office of the Public Guardian visit 17-year-old prisoners monthly. The Office of the Public Guardian is advised of all admissions, pending transfers and discharges.

While the incident highlighted today occurred in 2013, under the previous government, I am advised that Corrective Services investigated the matter at the time. However, I have asked that Corrective Services review that investigation to ensure that public confidence in the corrective services system is maintained.