



Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2025

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 18 September (see p. 2916), on motion of Mr Hunt—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 16, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Queensland Child and Family Commission*, tabled on 5 September 2025.



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (3.03 pm): I am pleased to rise to make a contribution to this debate. The committee report gives us a very clear picture of the Queensland Family and Child Commission's work and its commitment to transparency, accountability and the safety of children across our state. Of course, it also starkly reminds us just how far this LNP government and, in particular, this Minister for Child Safety have fallen short of some of these standards.

The QFCC's annual report has a strong focus on just how critical transparency and high-quality data are to keeping children safe. The Child Death Review Board, hosted by the QFCC, maintains Queensland's comprehensive child death register. The data collected through that process helps drive vital prevention work across agencies, from developing better risk indicators to information sharing with research partners and the Coroners Court. It is a powerful reminder that accurate, reliable data saves lives. Of course, the Minister for Child Safety's bungled Unify program puts systems that rely on that quality data at risk. Unify was meant to strengthen information sharing. Instead, it has put vulnerable children at risk. The QFCC relies on accurate data because child safety cannot run on guesswork. This is not just a software failure; it is a failure of leadership and a failure that impacts—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I understand we are debating report No. 16 into the QFCC, not the matters to which the member is talking.

Ms FENTIMAN: We are debating the QFCC report and the committee report gives us—

Mrs Frecklington: And the issues in it.

Ms FENTIMAN: Yes and I am very happy to go to this matter of relevance because 'data' is mentioned over 250 times in the QFCC's annual report. Data about child safety from the government—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Ms FENTIMAN:—is mentioned as being vital to the QFCC's work. I am still concluding my point of order, with respect, Attorney. Page 16 of the annual report states that they use data to improve the sector's understanding of risk factors. Page 19 of the QFCC annual report states that they use a range of data to understand intended outcomes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Thank you, member.

Ms FENTIMAN: I am being highly relevant, with respect.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Did you have another point of order, Attorney?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: In response, Mr Deputy Speaker, to the honourable member's point of order, the data we are talking about is Labor's failures under report 16 and to the date that it is referring to.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney-General. Member for McConnel, I was taking a point of order. I will seek some advice. Member for Waterford, I have sought advice. Just because the report refers to data does not enliven your opportunity to speak in breadth about the other matters that are being discussed. Could you confine your discussion to the data and the reports of the commissioner, please?

Ms FENTIMAN: At page 90, the QFCC 2023-24 annual report states—

An inability to source high-quality data outcomes—reduces our capacity to effectively monitor the impact of the child and family support system, restricting our ability to drive improvements and build a culture of accountability.

I would take that to mean that the Unify rollout has proved the QFCC right. Case records are missing and data feeds are broken. This is from the annual report and the transparency that the QFCC—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order related to the contribution by the member for Waterford. My point of order goes to relevance in relation to the particular reporting period that is referenced there. There is a narrow scope with respect to what the committee was looking at with respect to a time period. That is what this report relates to, not to matters that may be canvassed in the current financial period.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. The advice that I received was very clear that the report does speak about some—

Ms FENTIMAN: The importance of data.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, please do not be argumentative. I have sought advice. If you confine your contribution to the report then that will be very helpful for the House.

Ms FENTIMAN: As I was saying, the QFCC stresses in its report how important it is to have good data. It stresses how vital it is to have good data to keep children safe. Here we have a child safety system which has completely destroyed the trust of other agencies and regulatory bodies such as the QFCC. Child safety officers and the community now have no faith in the child safety system because of the implementation of Unify.

Government members interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: It is entirely relevant.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order relates to this particular report and the reporting period that it relates to. There are specific parameters in relation to what the committee was tasked to look at—with respect to not only the matters that it had to canvass but also the specific reporting period. I would question the relevance of the member's contribution given that we are talking about a specific period of time under the committee's remit related to those specific matters. I would ask you to draw the member for Waterford back to the specifics.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. You were going very well, member for Waterford.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Obviously, we are looking at data from 2023-24. We are examining it to educate ourselves about how we use data going forward. That is what this report is about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nice try, member for Logan. There is no point of order. The member for Waterford was going very well in her three sentences and then she started going back to matters outside the scope of this report. Please stick to the contents of this report. That will help the House.

Ms FENTIMAN: Again, I want to stress—

Mr Mander interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection from the member for Everton. I do not have to change a thing because this report on the QFCC talks extensively about the importance of quality data and keeping kids safe. We have seen an incredible failing by the child safety minister when it comes to keeping children safe.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, let's direct comments through the chair. Let's calm down. There is a broad discussion about data, but that does not enliven current situations that are not referred to in this report. There may be a very broad or tenuous link to some of those things in the past that we could learn from, but that is not something for you to debate in the House now. We are here to debate the committee report on the commission that has been tabled.

Ms FENTIMAN: Page 16 of the QFCC's annual report states that the QFCC uses data to improve the sector's understanding of risk factors. What happens when the child safety department has terrible data and there is a backlog of dangerous cases? That means—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, member for Currumbin and member for Everton, your contributions are not helpful and your interjections are not being taken.

Ms FENTIMAN: If this sector and regulator is unable to identify risk factors, what happens to these vulnerable children? That is my point. Having good data systems and having a minister who is prepared to ask the tough questions about systems that keep that data and those children safe is absolutely essential to the QFCC being able to do its job.

The commission is successfully using digital platforms to make quality, reliable system data accessible. It is the child safety department that has to provide that data to the QFCC so that it can perform its oversight function. If the data from the child safety department is not up to scratch, which we have clearly seen evidence of over the past couple of weeks, children will be at risk. That is what this report says. The minister needs to come in here and answer serious questions.