

**Question on Notice
No. 222
Asked on 27 April 2004**

MRS R MENKENS asked the Minister for Child Safety (MR REYNOLDS)-

QUESTION:

With reference to staffing within his department, will he provide –

1. A list of staff in each office, by position and public service classification, currently and for each year since 2001?
2. A list of current vacancies in each office, by position and public service classification?
3. An indication of how long each of these positions in (2) have been vacant and when they will be filled?

ANSWER:

(1) The government is concentrating its efforts and resources on key priorities in order to improve performance and respond to changing community needs and expectations. Staffing arrangements within the Department of Child Safety are similarly focused on departmental outputs to support the priorities. I refer the Member to the Ministerial Portfolio Statements of the former Department of Families for 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 for details of the number of staff employed to deliver the specified outputs for that department. As the Member may be aware, the responsibility for child protection under that former department, is now a responsibility of the Department of Child Safety. The Department of Child Safety was formally created by Machinery of Government change following the February 2004 State election. Staffing transitional arrangements between the former Department of Families and the current Department of Communities and Department of Child Safety are currently in progress.

(2) and (3) The Queensland Public Service does not operate a formal establishment management system. Under section 51 of the *Public Service Act 1996*, chief executives are responsible for deciding the number and classification levels of their employees.

Staffing structures are varied in accordance with the operational requirements of the department. Vacancies are managed within this context and are subject to a merit and equity process to ensure the best applicant for each position is recruited. Under these arrangements, a chief executive may decide not to re-staff a job that becomes vacant. This may be because a decision has been made to vary the staff profile of the unit concerned, or to apply the resources to a higher priority in another part of the department.

A national Child Safety recruitment campaign was officially launched by myself on Thursday, 29 April 2004 at Parliament House. The campaign seeks to recruit an additional 518 child protection workers within the Department of Child Safety over a three year period, with 318 of these to start in 2004/05. The balance will be

progressively rolled out over the following two years to ensure a mix of experienced staff, as well as new graduates.

Advertising for Child Safety Officers commenced in national newspapers and on Queensland radio on Saturday, 1 May 2004. Applications close on 31 May 2004. Advertising for Child Safety Support Officers commenced on 8 May 2004 and applications for these positions also close on 31 May 2004.

As selection processes are finalised, appointments will be made progressively across the state. It is expected that the majority of the 318 additional staff to be employed in 2004/05 will have been employed by December 2004.