

Question on Notice

No. 428

Asked on Wednesday 29 March 2006

Mr Hayward asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mrs Lavarch) –

QUESTION :

How many people have accessed the Department's Dispute Resolution Centre for assistance during the last financial year and how many of these reside in the Kallangur electorate?

ANSWER :

The Dispute Resolution Branch offers civil mediation services across Queensland through Dispute Resolution Centres located in Brisbane, Hervey Bay, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns. In addition to these Centres, panels of trained and accredited community mediators are also located in regions including Mt Isa, Proserpine, Emerald, Bundaberg, Gympie and Roma.

The Dispute Resolution Branch was established in 1990 primarily for the purpose of mediating disputes between neighbours. Neighbourhood mediations still constitute a significant portion of all mediations completed by the Branch state-wide. In addition to neighbourhood mediations the Branch now also conducts a large number of mediations in regard to commercial disputes, family quarrels and workplace disagreements.

During the 2004/05 financial year the Dispute Resolution Branch opened a total of 3,235 files and conducted a total of 1,937 mediations state-wide. Of these mediations an agreement rate of approximately 86% was achieved in regard to mediations where attendance was voluntary. A total of 29 files involved parties residing in the Kallangur electorate. From these files a total of 18 mediations were conducted during this period.

In addition to the mediation sessions conducted by the Branch it is also important to note the other services provided to members of the community involved in conflict. In the event that mediation is not successful or is not accepted the Branch spends considerable time discussing with disputing parties their other options and the most effective and peaceful means of managing their conflict.