

**Question on Notice  
No. 1860  
Asked on 26 November 2008**

MR LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP asked the Minister for Child Safety (MRS KEECH)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the statement on page 39 of the 2007-08 Child Death Case Review Committee report and the response from her department, which states 'case plan compliance statistics continue to be regularly reported through the Department's Operational Performance review process' and using the results of the last two Operational Performance reviews—

- (1) How many children did not have an active case plan?
- (2) How many children had case plans that had not been reviewed or updated in the last 12 months?
- (3) How many children had been transferred between child safety service centres that had no current or up-to-date case plan?
- (4) How many children subject to a matter of concern whilst in care did not have an active or up-to-date case plan in 2007-08?

ANSWER:

The Bligh Government takes its responsibility to children in care extremely seriously and one of our top priorities is to ensure they are happy, healthy, nurtured and safe.

This is why every child in care has a case plan. A case plan is required by a magistrate before they will grant an order to take a child into care.

Case plans are living documents that are monitored and reviewed by our Child Safety Officers every time they make one of their regular personal visits or phone calls to children in care and their carers.

The safety and wellbeing of children in care is further monitored by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian's program of Community Visitors who also regularly visit children in care.

As a result of the introduction of ICMS any new information we receive about a child or their carer is available at a CSO's fingertips, and entire case histories are available to make sure that new information can be seen in context.

The result of this is that every time any CSO logs on to the system to view and update the progress of any child they are case managing, they are, in effect, reviewing that child's case plan.

This is the most effective way of monitoring how children in care are travelling – which is what a case plan should do.

Our goal is to ensure the children in our care are safe – and we know for a fact that this is the case. You only have to look at the results of a survey by the Commission for Children and Young People of the views of children in care.

This survey found that 99% of children and young people in care say they are safe - up from 98% percent the previous year.

A further 96% say they are better off since coming into care - an increase of 6%.

Just like other government agencies, we prioritise our time and resources to make sure they are going to where they are most needed.

Ongoing formal case plan reviews are done on a priority basis with a particular focus on babies and toddlers aged 0-4 years – which research tells us are the most vulnerable - and children with complex cases, high needs and challenging behaviours.

As I have previously informed the Liberal National Party, my Department's case planning data collection is migrating to ICMS and work is underway to streamline recording procedures to ensure more reliable capture of information. Up to date central collection of case planning data will be available once the user testing phase is finalised.