

## Question on Notice

No. 1874

Asked on Thursday , 27 November 2008

**Mr LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG** asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland (Mr Shine) -

### QUESTION:

With reference to court adjournments-

- (1) How many matters were adjourned in 2006-07 and 2007-08 for periods longer than 6 months due to delays in forensic services/analysis not being available (reported separately)?
- (2) How many matters were dismissed by the court for delays in forensic services (formerly John Tonge Centre) in 2006-07 and 2007-08 (reported separately)?
- (3) How many matters were adjourned in 2006-07 and 2007-08 because of witness unavailability (reported separately and for each court level)?

### ANSWER:

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (the Department) and each court jurisdiction report extensively on the matters lodged and dealt with by the courts in their respective Annual Reports. The specific information requested in this question is not readily available and I am advised by the Department that it would involve substantial departmental resources at a significant public cost to manually collate the information. For this reason I can not support the collation of this information and provide the following response as an alternative.

While the information sought is not readily available, I can assure you that the Department is committed to ensuring timely and accessible justice for all Queenslanders.

This is clearly evidenced in the Department's 2007-08 Annual Report, which highlights the impressive clearance rates achieved by Queensland's Courts. Clearance rates are seen nationally as a simple but useful measure of productivity that indicates if a court is keeping up with its workload.

The clearance rate is derived by dividing the number of finalisations in the financial year, by the number of lodgements in the same period and multiplying this figure by 100 to convert to a percentage. A clearance rate of more than 100% indicates the court is reducing its pending caseload.

During the 2007-08 financial year, the results achieved by the combined jurisdictions were:

- Supreme Courts - 100.2%
- District Courts - 100.4% and
- Magistrates Courts (including Coroners matters) - 99.6%.