

Question on Notice

No. 1802

Asked on 12 November 2009

Dr Flegg asked the Minister for Education and Training (Mr Wilson) —

QUESTION:

With reference to child care facilities—

- (1) How many complaints have been received since 1 January 2009 and how many compliance notices have been issued in the same period?
- (2) How many visits have been undertaken?
- (3) How many staff are employed in visits and complaints sections of the department?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question and interest in the Bligh Government's commitment to a robust compliance regime for child care services currently operating in Queensland.

I have been advised by the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care (the Office) that there have been 714 complaints about child care services received between 1 January 2009 and 13 November 2009.

Not all complaints received by the Office can be dealt with under the *Child Care Act 2002*. For example, complaints about child care fees and child care benefit payments may need to be referred to the Australian Government and some complaints about service policies and procedures may be referred to the licensee of the service where appropriate.

As part of standard monitoring of compliance of child care services, there have been 52 compliance notices issued between 1 January 2009 and 13 November 2009.

At least 98 per cent of child care services receive a monitoring visit by departmental staff at least once each year, with licensing visits occurring every three years. Additional visits are undertaken by authorised officers as required, for instance to follow up on complaints or check that matters identified in previous visits have been rectified. Between 1 January 2009 and 13 November 2009, as at 20 November 2009 7,730 visits were undertaken.

There are currently 84 authorised officers employed across Queensland in 15 service centres to monitor and license child care services. These staff investigate complaints.