

Question on Notice

No. 1991

Asked on 6 October 2010

MR DEMPSEY asked the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport (MR REEVES)—

QUESTION

With reference to substantiations in 2007–08, 2008–09 and for the year to March 2010—

How many substantiations had a previous (a) child concern report (b) notification and (c) substantiation (reported by year)?

ANSWER

To extract the data the member has requested in part (a) of his question from the department's systems would require a complex and lengthy process that would be labour intensive and time consuming for the hard working staff of Child Safety Services.

This type of data is held in individual case files and is accessed by front line staff to ensure children receive appropriate supports and services to help them address the trauma they may have experienced.

As I advised the Member in my response to Question on Notice 1920 and as is publicly available on the internet, there were 8,028 substantiations in 2007–08, 7,315 substantiations in 2008–09 and 6,837 substantiations in the year ending March 2010. The Member is asking child safety services to undertake a significant process. I am sure the Member would agree Child Safety staff would be better served looking after the needs of children in care.

I also remind the Member of his statements during his budget reply speech on 11 June 2010 in which he spoke of '*appeasing bean counters*'. I trust the Member understands that his regular requests for data, contained in individual case files, would require diverting key staff from the Department's core business, which is child protection.

While there is a substantial amount of data that is available and able to be reported at the push of a button, detailed information relating to individual files, such as the member has asked for, would require a significant extraction process.

I point out that when the former incarnation of the LNP was last in government its annual report contained only one measure for each of the five regions. That measure was the number of children under protective orders.

In response to part (b) of the Member's question, I believe the Member is demonstrating a lack of understanding of child safety processes as all substantiations began with a prior notification.

In response to part (c) of the Member's question, I can advise that in 2007–08, there were 1,691, in 2008–09, there were 1,653 and in the year ending March 2010, there were 1,644 substantiations where there had been a previous substantiation.

Today, Queensland's Child Safety Services has one of the most open and comprehensive reporting systems across Australia. In fact, the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services), reports on over 150 separate measures each year, and more than 80 of these measures are reported on a quarterly basis.