

**Question on Notice  
No. 504  
Asked on 5 June 2014**

MR JUDGE asked the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services (MR DEMPSEY)—

**QUESTION:**

With reference to the provisions of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014 where all offenders other than those reporting for life, will have their reporting obligations (i.e. periods) reduced from eight years and twelve years respectively to five years and ten years respectively—

What evidence justifies the reductions in reporting periods and will the Minister cite the source(s)?

**ANSWER:**

This Government has a strong plan for a brighter and safer future for Queensland, including those who are most vulnerable.

The *Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014* will require sex offenders to report their whereabouts to police after their release into the community from eight years, 15 years and life to five years, 10 years and life based on recidivist offending.

However, within those reporting periods, reportable offenders will be required to report at least FOUR times per year rather than annually, which was previously the case under a Labor Government that put perpetrators ahead of victims.

As an example, an offender reporting under the old system for 8 years would generally report to police 8 times (annually) after making his/her initial report. That same offender reporting for 5 years as a result of this Government's amendments, would be required to report a minimum of 20 times during the reporting period after making their initial report.

The new reporting timeframes align with contemporary research that child sex offenders pose the greatest risk of re-offending within the first five years of their release into the community.

The following sources were used to assist in developing the new reporting regime:

- Australian Institute of Criminology
- Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology
- Police Practice and Research: An International Journal
- Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment

The research in these sources shows that the re-offence rates in large combined samples of child sexual offenders are at their highest within the first three to five years after release into the community, with the rate of re-offending substantially decreasing beyond 10 years.

The research further indicates that of all child sex offenders, the proportion of re-offending is shown to be around 14 per cent to 16 per cent at five years after release, four per cent to six per cent at 10 years after release, and three per cent to five per cent at 20 years after release.

This pattern of re-offending is consistent with recidivist child sex offender behaviour in Queensland. Information on the Queensland component of the National Child Offender systems indicates that generally, a convicted child sex offender presents the highest risk of re-offending within the first five years of his or her release from detention.

Furthermore, the Act now enables the Police Commissioner to increase reporting requirements and determine the method of reporting. For example, should police deem a reportable offender poses a significant risk to the lives and safety of children, then the Police Commissioner may require that offender to report in person to a police station more frequently than the minimum quarterly requirement.

These amendments mean our State is introducing the toughest child sex offender reporting obligations in the country.

This Government is leading the way in this respect and are putting reportable offenders on notice that we are serious about making them accountable for their crimes and are monitoring their movements. This will ensure Queensland is an even safer place to live and raise a family.