

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 1683**

**Asked on 15 September 2016**

**MR WALKER** ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS (HON Y D'ATH) –

### **QUESTION:**

With reference to those youths detained in Queensland youth detention facilities (a) on how many occasions were there reported incidents of detainee on detainee incidents involving at least one detainee aged 17 years of age over the 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years (reported separately)?

### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Honourable Member for Mansfield for his question.

Queensland youth detention centres are complex environments charged with the responsibility for rehabilitating a diverse range of young people who come from challenging, disadvantaged, and traumatic backgrounds. These facilities are faced with a dynamic mix of young people on a daily basis, and this can present challenges and volatility in the interactions between young people. Whilst it is acknowledged that physical altercations cannot always be eradicated in custodial environments, it can be kept at acceptable levels through prevention, de-escalation, appropriate intervention options, mandatory staff training and effective management practices. To this end, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) has embedded a Protective Actions Continuum to ensure that staff are appropriately trained to minimise and de-escalate the occurrence of incidents. This continuum also equips staff with a range of interventions to respond to escalated incidents where necessary, using the least amount of force possible.

DJAG has also implemented a trauma informed practice framework for working with young people in youth detention. Trauma informed practice acknowledges the unique needs and experiences of young people in youth detention (including their trauma backgrounds) and provides individualised care and support to assist young people on their path to rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community. This represents an innovative and best practice framework for working with young people in youth detention, who represent some of the most vulnerable in our community. In time, it is hoped that this approach will assist young people to develop more functional methods for dealing with their emotions and needs that does not require their expression of violence.

In 2015, Youth Justice, DJAG introduced a new incident classification system to improve management and reporting of incidents in youth detention centres. As a result of this change, DJAG cannot report comparable data for the three years requested.

During 2015-16, there were 37 incidents involving young people aged 17 years of age.