

Question on Notice

No. 309

Asked on 26 March 2019

MR S BENNETT asked the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (HON D FARMER)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise the average case load per month (from July 2017 to date and reported separately by centre) (a) for each child safety service centre and (b) for each regional intake centre?

ANSWER

- (a) Caseload data is reported by the department on a quarterly basis. Caseloads vary on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, by officer and centre, as families come in and out of contact with the Child Safety services, or move between locations.

Data has been provided for the quarters 30 September 2017 to 30 September 2018, which is the latest available. For comparison purposes caseload data as at 30 June 2014 is also provided.

As at 30 September 2018, the statewide average caseload was 16.9. This is the fourth consecutive quarter that caseloads have remained below 18. By comparison, the statewide average caseload as at 30 June 2014 was 20.3.

As at 30 June 2014	As at 30 Sept 2017	As at 31 Dec 2017	As at 31 Mar 2018	As at 30 June 2018	As at 30 Sep 2018
20.3	18.6	17.6	17.4	17.0	16.9

Case management responsibilities can differ, depending on the child, their personal needs, their educational needs, their health, their location, their connection to culture, and the type of guardianship situation. Caseload numbers do not capture the complexities of the child protection system or the realities of day to day work with families with varying and increasingly complex needs.

Queensland's 2018-19 Budget includes \$52.8 million to continue implementation of critical reforms to the child protection system. This means more Child Safety frontline and frontline support positions to bring down caseloads and help ensure the system can respond quickly and effectively to the needs of vulnerable children and families. This means that Queensland will have invested in 458 new positions since 2016. 129 were provided in 2016-17, 236 in 2017-18 and a further 93 in 2018-19.

On 16 February 2019, the Palaszczuk Government committed a further \$374 million over the next three years (from 2019-20) to continue existing reforms to strengthen Queensland's child protection system.

- (b) The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women does not calculate caseloads for staff working in Regional Intake Services. Staff working in a regional intake service do not case manage children or have cases assigned to them.