

## Question on Notice

No. 1224

Asked on 28 October 2022

**MR D JANETZKI** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (HON L LINARD)—

### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise the number of young people identified as serious repeat offenders (reported separately by year of age from 10 to 17 years) in (a) Toowoomba, (b) Darling Downs and (c) the Southern Region?

### ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to reducing offending and reoffending and keeping the community safe by addressing the drivers of youth crime.

Across Queensland, the number of young people who offend has been decreasing over time. The number of young people with a proven offence decreased 13 per cent in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21, and 28 per cent compared to 2018-19.

We also know that a large number of young people who come into contact with the youth justice system do not return to the system. This demonstrates the programs, services and interventions designed to intervene early, identify the underlying causes of offending and address those issues, are having an impact.

However, the Queensland Government recognises there is a small proportion of young people offending who commit a disproportionately large number of offences and have an unacceptable impact on community safety. To help tackle this, the Queensland Government has strengthened accountability for serious repeat offenders (SROs) by amending the *Youth Justice Act 1922* to introduce a limited presumption against bail for young people charged with particular offences.

The Youth Justice Taskforce, led by Queensland Police Service Assistant Commissioner, Ms Cheryl Scanlon, brings together senior executives from across relevant agencies, including the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, Queensland Health and the Department of Education. A key priority of the Taskforce is to address SROs and it has done so through the development of a Multi-agency Action Plan aimed at a whole-of-government approach to collaborative case management and service delivery.

The below table contains the average daily number of SROs during 2021-22 in the Toowoomba Local Government Area (LGA), Darling Downs LGA and Southern Region. All young people counted in the Toowoomba figures are counted in the Darling Downs and Southern Region. Likewise, all young people counted in the Darling Downs figures are counted in the Southern Region.

On an average day in 2021-22, there were less than 15 SROs in the Toowoomba LGA which is less than a tenth of one per cent of the Estimated Resident Population of 10-17-year-olds in the Toowoomba LGA. For the same period for the Darling Downs, on an average day there were less than 19 SROs, which is also less than a tenth of one per cent of the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of 10-17-year-olds in the Darling Downs. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports on ERP<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Population figures based on *Estimated Resident Population, Customised Report, Estimated Resident Population; Age by Sex, by Queensland LGAs (2016 ASGS) 30 June: 2011 to 2019. Figures provided are estimates for 30 June 2022.*

**Average daily number of SROs, by age and location during the 2021-22 financial year**

Age	Location		
	(a) Toowoomba	(b) Darling Downs	(c) South West Region
10	0	0	0
11	0.2	0.2	0.2
12	1.2	1.5	1.8
13	2.1	2.9	5.2
14	4.0	4.4	14.6
15	1.8	2.0	19.5
16	3.1	5.4	21.3
17	2.2	2.6	10.6

Source: Performance Reporting and Analytics - Youth Justice; Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs

1. Young people are counted once per day, per locality.
2. The Darling Downs LGA is defined as encompassing Goondiwindi, Southern Downs, Toowoomba, and Western Downs LGAs.
3. Toowoomba LGA and Darling Downs region are based on the usual place of residence of the young person at the most recent data point.
4. Young people are counted in figures for the 'South West Region' on a given date if: (a) the Youth Justice Service Centre (YJSC) responsible for their case management on the most recent day of their supervision is located in the South West Region, or (b) they live in the catchment area of a YJSC in the South West Region.
5. Data are based on the Youth Justice dataset 'Serious Repeat Offender Index - Daily Number', and are accurate as at 31 July 2022. Calculations based on different datasets, or different data snapshots, may produce different results.