

## Question on Notice

No. 859

Asked on 18 August 2022

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

### QUESTION

With reference to the Minister's response to the petition 'Major Reforms to Address Escalating Crime in the Far North Queensland Community' suggesting that young people offending is at its lowest level in a decade and that the 10 percent of serious repeat offenders are responsible for 48 percent of youth crime; and there being record crime rates in North Queensland—

Will the Minister advise what the current reoffender rate is for juvenile offenders who have been incarcerated at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre?

### ANSWER

The petition response referred to above stated that 'the number of young people committing offences is at its lowest in a decade', not that 'young people offending is at its lowest level in a decade' as suggested.

In the North and Far North Queensland regions, in the 12-month period ending 31 March 2019, compared to the 12-month period ending 31 March 2022, there has been a 25 per cent decrease in the number of young offenders aged 10-17.

While fewer young people are offending, and many are being successfully diverted after a first offence, there continues to be a small group of serious repeat offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of harm in the community, and who make up a significant proportion of young people who are remanded in custody.

It is this cohort that the community are rightly raising concerns about and it is this cohort that our Government is focussed on.

Last year our Government committed to deploying 2025 extra police, the largest investment in police for decades. In addition to making amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 1992* to introduce a presumption against bail requiring serious repeat offenders who are an unacceptable risk to the community be denied bail.

Assistant Police Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon was also appointed to lead a stand-alone Youth Justice Taskforce, to oversee reforms focused on serious repeat offenders. The current focus of the Taskforce is on building intensive multi-agency case management of serious repeat offenders across the state. This includes each agency coming together to address issues that contribute to reoffending, including education, employment, health, accommodation and family supervision to support long-term, meaningful change for the young people.

In the 12-month period ending 31 March 2021, there were 322 distinct young people who completed a custody stay at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. Of those young people, 95 per cent were alleged to have committed another offence in the 12 months following their release.

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs has recently established a 72-hour transition plan process targeted at young people exiting custody. The 72-hour transition plans are a statewide initiative designed to provide enhanced supervision, program engagement and support as a young person exits detention to reduce reoffending post release.

Ongoing evaluation of services and programs will underpin decision-making about future investment and re-investment with an intensified focus on programs that are targeted towards serious repeat offenders.