

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 1195**  
**Asked on 11 October 2023**

**MRS L GERBER** ASKED MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise from 1 September 2022 to 30 September 2023 (reported separately by age and indigenous status) (a) the number of juveniles detained in police watch houses for (i) two to six nights and (ii) more than one week and (b) the longest period of time a juvenile was detained in a police watch house?

ANSWER:

On 29 December 2022, the Queensland Government announced a new 10-point plan aimed at keeping the community safe and to strengthen youth justice laws.

On 16 March 2023, the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 was passed in the legislative assembly, amending the *Criminal Code Act 1899(Qld)*, *Bail Act 1980 (Qld)*, *Youth Justice Act 1992 (Qld)* and *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 (Qld)*.

The legislative reforms provided police officers with additional powers to keep the community safe, including:

- Allowing police officers to charge youth offenders for breaching conditions of their bail undertaking,
- Removing the requirement for police officers to consider alternatives to arrest if they reasonably suspect a child on bail for a prescribed indictable offence or certain domestic violence offences, has contravened or is contravening a bail condition,
- Allowing police officers to charge new circumstances of aggravation for the offence of unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessels, including where the offender has published material advertising their involvement in or of the offending on social media.

I am advised by the Queensland Police Service (QPS) when a juvenile is remanded in custody by a court, the court does not order the specific location to which they are remanded. Whilst remanded juveniles would ordinarily be transported directly to a Youth Detention Centre (YDC), in certain circumstances they may be required to be held in a watchhouse for a period of time, prior to being transferred to a YDC.

I am also advised that the QPS engages an array of government and non-government agencies to support the welfare of juveniles in watchhouse custody. The QPS works directly with the Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training, who assess a juvenile's requirements and assist with supporting their needs.

On 5 October 2023, the Queensland Government announced the allocation of up to \$250 million to initially construct a 50-bed Youth Remand Centre at Wacol. The facility will be delivered by a rapid delivery method with completion scheduled for 2024. The facility will be strategically located close to the Brisbane and West Moreton Youth Detention

Centres. Young people in the Youth Remand Centre at Wacol will be supported by services through both the Brisbane and West Moreton Youth Detention Centres including, but not limited to; education, counselling, mental health, health and therapeutic services.

In relation to the member's question, I am advised by the QPS that between 1 September 2022 and 30 September 2023 (inclusive):

(a) the number of juveniles detained in police watchhouses for:

- (i) two to six nights was less than or equal to three juveniles aged 10 years (less than or equal to three indigenous, zero non-indigenous); 4 juveniles aged 11 years (4 indigenous, zero non-indigenous); 24 juveniles aged 12 years (17 indigenous, 7 non-indigenous); 89 juveniles aged 13 years (68 indigenous, 21 non-indigenous); 140 juveniles aged 14 years (97 indigenous, 43 non-indigenous); 212 juveniles aged 15 years (128 indigenous, 84 non-indigenous); 203 juveniles aged 16 years (121 indigenous, 82 non-indigenous); and 177 juveniles aged 17 years (97 indigenous, 80 non-indigenous); and
- (ii) more than one week was zero juveniles aged 10 years; zero juveniles aged 11 years; less than or equal to three juveniles aged 12 years (less than or equal to three indigenous, zero non-indigenous); 30 juveniles aged 13 years (21 indigenous, 9 non-indigenous); 67 juveniles aged 14 years (49 indigenous, 18 non-indigenous); 150 juveniles aged 15 years (96 indigenous, 54 non-indigenous); 190 juveniles aged 16 years (112 indigenous, 78 non-indigenous); and 163 juveniles aged 17 years (97 indigenous, 66 non-indigenous).

**Notes:**

- 1. This data is preliminary and may be subject to change.
- 2. Data relate to persons in custody in police watchhouses, for any reason, aged 10-17 years on admission to custody.
- 3. Police watchhouses data are based on the latest detention unit a person was in and includes watchhouses and selected police stations.
- 4. Number of juveniles refer to the number of unique persons aged 10-17 years and includes persons taken into custody for any reason.
- 5. Data do not indicate the number of persons held in a police watchhouse on any individual day.
- 6. Data may differ from statistics reported and published by other Queensland Government agencies.
- 7. Length of stay has been calculated based on the number of hours between entering and leaving custody.
  - Two to six days: 48 to 167 hours
  - More than one week: over 168 hours
- 8. Data where the custody start time is after custody end time are excluded due to data quality issues.
- 9. Where the number of offenders is less than or equal to three, the actual number is not specifically stated for privacy reasons

(b) the longest period of time a juvenile was detained in a police watchhouse aged 10 years was 4.6 days (indigenous) and zero days (non-indigenous); aged 11 years was 6.6 days (indigenous) and 1.2 days (non-indigenous); aged 12 years was 9.5 days (indigenous) and 6.5 days (non-indigenous); aged 13 years was 18.5 days (indigenous) and 18.4 days (non-indigenous); aged 14 years was 25.5 days (indigenous) and 23.1 days (non-indigenous); aged 15 years was 32.2 days (indigenous) and 30 days (non-indigenous); aged 16 years was 39 days (indigenous) and 28.8 days (non-indigenous); and aged 17 years was 31.6 days (indigenous) and 35 days (non-indigenous).

**Notes:**

- 1. This data is preliminary and may be subject to change.
- 2. Data relate to persons in custody in police watchhouses, for any reason, aged 10-17 years on admission to custody.

3. Police watchhouses data are based on the latest detention unit a person was in and includes watchhouses and selected police stations.
4. Length of stay is calculated as the number of hours between custody start time and custody end time, converted to days.
5. Data do not indicate the number of persons held in a police watchhouse on any individual day.
6. Data may differ from statistics reported and published by other Queensland Government agencies.
7. Data where the custody start time is after custody end time are excluded due to data quality issues.