

Question on Notice
No. 1394
Asked on 14 November 2023

MR D LAST ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Queensland Corrective Services—

Will the Minister advise in relation to Custodial Corrections Officers (a) how many are currently absent from work and receiving WorkCover benefits, (b) how many were absent from work and receiving WorkCover benefits in the 2022-23 financial year and (c) the average period that they were absent from work and receiving WorkCover benefits in the 2022-23 financial year?

ANSWER:

As the Member would be aware, this government has always backed front line workers and to support the safety of Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) staff we have taken a three-pronged approach, introducing legislative, operational and infrastructure upgrades to make correctional environments safer.

We increased the maximum penalty for anyone convicted of seriously assaulting a corrective services officer with aggravating circumstances to 14 years. This is being supported by recent safety and security equipment enhancements, including additional body worn cameras and tactical gear, in as well as installing approximately 1000 more safety hatches across the state, making prisoner movements and interactions safer. QCS is also continuing the rollout of a new Tactical Options and Skills training model as well as Maybo training, both of which have a stronger focus on communication skills and de-escalation techniques.

And finally, all custodial correctional officers are trained in the deployment of Mk3 OC spray, and all officers at high security men's correctional centres, as well as the Escort Unit within the Escort and Security Branch, are now equipped with Mk3 OC spray.

As a result of these initiatives, QCS is positioned as one of the best trained, best equipped, and safest correctional services in Australasia.

I refer the member to my response to Question on Notice 1310 of 2022 where the Member asked a similar question and I am further advised by QCS that in response to the Member's question this year, the answers as of 15 November 2023 are:

- (a) 101, compared to 159 when last reported to the Member in 2022;
- (b) 491, compared to 476 when last reported to the Member in 2022;
- (c) 6.71 paid days, compared to 6.82 paid days when last reported to the Member in 2022.

Please note:

1. The above data is calculated using WorkCover data only. This data has not been validated against Human Resources data.
2. The accuracy of the above data is subject to proper classification of 'custodial correctional officer' at point of data entry for WorkCover purposes.
3. WorkCover data only provides paid days which represents both total incapacity and partial incapacity payments made to individuals receiving WorkCover benefits for Accepted claims.
4. Paid days do not represent leave taken during a particular financial year. The Workcover data does not provide sufficient information to determine leave taken in a particular period, only paid days per claim.