

Question on Notice
No. 905
Asked on 20 August 2024

MRS L GERBER ASKED MINISTER FOR POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY (HON M RYAN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to youth offenders—

Will the Minister provide (a) the total number of cautions given to young offenders in 2023-24, (b) the number of unique offenders who received a caution in 2023-24, (c) the number of unique offenders who have received more than 5 cautions in the last three years and (d) the number of young offenders who have received more than 10 cautions in the last three years?

ANSWER:

The Member should note that it is at the discretion of the officer, guided by the relevant legislation and policy, as to whether to action a matter by way of caution. The Miles Government will always back the professionalism of police officers to make those decisions. To criticise an officer's decision is an insult to their professionalism.

I am advised that police cautioning has been examined during the public briefings of the bi-partisan Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, where the Member for Ninderry said *"I do know it is successful, as 80 per cent or more never reoffend"*ⁱ in relation to cautioning of young offenders. Further, the Member for Lockyer said *"The diversionary processes that you do in the police see about 91 per cent of cautioned offenders never offend again."*ⁱⁱ

In relation to the Member's question, I am advised by the Queensland Police Service that:

- (a) 15,354 in FY 2023-24;
- (b) 7,099 in FY 2023-24;
- (c) 353 over three years; and
- (d) Seven over three years.

Notes:

1. This data is preliminary and may be subject to change.
2. Data relates to young person actioned by a 'caution' during the reporting period.
3. Young persons refer to persons aged between 10 and 17 at the time of action.
4. A person under 10 is considered too young to be criminally responsible and have been excluded from offender counts.
5. Only persons whose age are identified have been included.
6. A caution may relate to one or more offences; therefore, the count of cautions will not necessarily relate to a count of offences.
7. (Cautions issued) These figures do not represent a unique offender count. A person actioned for multiple offences will be counted multiple times.
8. (Unique Offenders) Unique offenders refer to the number of juveniles actioned by cautions for person, property or other offences. A person cautioned by police more than once is counted once.

9. (More than 5 and 10 cautions) Unique offenders who received more than 5 and 10 cautions are assumed to have been issued with 5 or more and 10 or more cautions, respectively, on different days between July 2021 to June 2024. Those persons must still be aged under 18 in June 2024.

ⁱ Source: Youth Justice Selection Committee, Public Briefing on Wednesday 21 February 2024 transcript, page 15 (<https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/YJRSC-6004/YJRSC-54D8/Transcript%20-%2021%20February%202024%20-%20YJRC%20-%20Briefing%20-%20Inquiry%20to%20examine%20ongoing%20reforms%20to%20the%20youth%20justice%20system%20and%20support%20for%20victims%20of%20crime.pdf>)

ⁱⁱ Source: Youth Justice Selection Committee, Public Briefing on Wednesday 21 February 2024 transcript, page 16 (<https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/YJRSC-6004/YJRSC-54D8/Transcript%20-%2021%20February%202024%20-%20YJRC%20-%20Briefing%20-%20Inquiry%20to%20examine%20ongoing%20reforms%20to%20the%20youth%20justice%20system%20and%20support%20for%20victims%20of%20crime.pdf>)