QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 864

Asked on 25 August 2026

MR B MELLISH ASKED THE MINISTER FOR YOUTH JUSTICE AND VICTIM SUPPORT AND MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES (HON L GERBER)

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the average number of young people per day in July 2025 and again in July 2026 (reported separately by 2025/2026 and by centre), that were separated as a result of staff shortages at (a) Brisbane Youth Detention Centre and (b) Wacol Youth Remand Centre?

ANSWER:

The Crisafulli Government is restoring safety where Queenslanders live with more police, stronger laws, early intervention and rehabilitation. Our Government has also strengthened staffing levels in our Youth Detention Centres (YDCs), to build a confident, capable and professional YDC workforce. Across Queensland's youth detention centres, there are now more than 1,136 full-time-equivalent staff compared to just 900 staff in June 2024 under the former government. This increase in staffing at YDCs has resulted in a decrease in the number of separations due to staff shortages.

Violence against staff in YDCs is not tolerated, and that is why we are continuing to implement our new Detention with Purpose policy to ensure there are clear consequences for actions when youth are violent towards our staff. As a result, in 2025-26, most separations were used as a de-escalation measure to protect staff with 73 per cent lasting less than two hours.

The comparison requested cannot be provided because the Department's data cannot distinguish separations arising from staff shortages from those arising from protected industrial action.

During July 2026, protected industrial action was undertaken by youth detention staff as part of enterprise bargaining negotiations. This included staff who were rostered to work withdrawing their labour and leaving their posts to participate in protected industrial action. As a result, youth offenders may have been separated for operational and safety reasons. Separations on those days resulted from staff leaving their posts, not from a shortage of staff employed. However, the Department's separation data does not distinguish these instances from separations arising from actual staff shortage.

The Crisafulli Government will continue to back frontline YDC staff and deliver Detention with Purpose, with compulsory education, staff safety and clear consequences for actions to reduce reoffending and restore safety where Queenslanders live.