

Queensland Government response

Inquiry into the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

Report No. 43, 57th Parliament

Community Support and Services Committee

On 21 March 2024, the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly.

The Bill includes amendments that implement Recommendation 3 of Report No. 41, 57th Parliament by the then Legal Affairs and Safety Committee in relation to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022 for agencies to review portfolio legislation to assess the use of gendered language and identify any amendments required as a result of the introduction of the new laws.

After introduction, the Bill was referred to the Community Support and Services Committee for consideration. On 10 May 2024, the committee tabled its report on the Bill.

The Queensland Government response to each recommendation of the committee are as follows.

Recommendation 1

That the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 be passed.

Noted

The Queensland Government thanks the committee for its consideration of the Bill and notes this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

That the Queensland Police Service conducts appropriate training of officers and support staff that focuses on diversity and intersection of LGBTIQ+ individuals encountering the criminal justice system as part of the implementation of the reforms proposed in the Bill.

Supported

The Queensland Government supports the provision of training to members of the Queensland Police Service to support the delivery of safe, fair and inclusive policing services that are accessible to all members of the community. This includes services and programs that are tailored and responsive to the needs of LGBTIQ+ people.

The Queensland Police Service recognises people of diverse genders, diverse sexualities and innate variations of sex characteristics. Each person has unique and distinct needs with diverse experiences and backgrounds.

All members of the Queensland Police Service have an obligation to engage with people from LGBTIQ+ communities in accordance with legislation, policy and best practice to ensure interactions are respectful, ethical, equitable, fair and compatible with human rights.

To address this recommendation, the Queensland Police Service will review existing training provided to members about conducting searches and policing for LGBTIQ+ communities. This training will be updated to ensure frontline members understand the new provisions and how to apply them.

Recommendation 3

That the Minister for Police and Community Safety provide further clarification of the circumstances in which it is not 'reasonably practicable' to accommodate a gender preference.

Supported

The Queensland Government acknowledges calls from stakeholders for further clarification of about when it is not reasonably practicable to accommodate a preference about the gender of the person who is to conduct a search.

As stated in the explanatory notes, the Bill retains a limited discretion about who may conduct a search. It is not intended that the retention of such discretion in any way weaken the existing safeguards.

The Minister for Police and Community Safety will move amendments during consideration in detail to clarify the provision.

Recommendation 4

That Queensland Corrective Services address the current difficulties to recruit qualified psychologists with a proactive recruitment campaign.

Supported in-principle

The Queensland Government supports in-principle the recommendation.

In addition to a current recruitment campaign, Queensland Corrective Services' Psychological Services Workforce Planning Project will continue to explore opportunities to attract and retain qualified psychologists statewide.