



**Review of the
Auditor-General's Report to
Parliament 4: 2013-14
Follow up - Management of
offenders subject to
supervision in the community**

Report No. 39, 55th Parliament
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
September 2016

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Auditor-General's Report to
Parliament 4: 2013-14**
*Follow up – Management of
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the community*

Report No. 39, 55th Parliament
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
September 2016

Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Chair	Mr Mark Furner MP, Member for Ferny Grove
Deputy Chair¹	Mr Michael Crandon MP, Member for Coomera (from 25 May 2016)
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¹ Mr Crandon was appointed Deputy Chair on 25 May 2016. Mr Krause was Deputy Chair until 25 May 2016.

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Abbreviations

2011 Report	Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2011, Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community
2013 Follow Up Report	Report No. 4 of 2013-14 of the Queensland Audit Office: <i>Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community</i>
committee	Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
department	Department of Justice and Attorney-General
former Committee	The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee of the 54 th Parliament
PRISM	In 2009, QCS commenced the People, Resourcing, Innovation, Supervision and Management program to address issues relating to resourcing and the supervision of offenders in the community
QCS	Queensland Corrective Services
RoGS	Report on Government Services

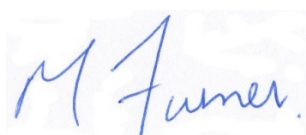
Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's examination of the Auditor-General's report *Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*.

In the course of the committee's review of the Auditor-General's report, data anomalies were discovered within information provided to the Auditor-General which formed the basis of his report. This discovery has led to the Auditor-General undertaking a performance audit which will look at the use and reliability of criminal justice data across the criminal justice system. The results of this further audit are expected to be tabled by early December 2016.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the committee's secretariat and the staff from the Auditor-General's office, and the staff from Queensland Corrective Services and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, for their assistance with the committee's consideration of the Auditor-General's report.

I commend this report to the House.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'M Furner'.

Mr Mark Furner MP
Chair

Recommendation

Recommendation 1

8

The committee recommends the House note this Report.

Introduction

1.1 Role of the committee

The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee (the committee) is a portfolio committee of the Legislative Assembly which commenced on 27 March 2015.²

The committee's primary areas of responsibility include:

- Justice and Attorney-General
- Police Service
- Fire and Emergency Services, and
- Training and Skills.

A portfolio committee is to consider legislation, public works and public accounts matters pertaining to its areas of responsibility, and to deal with any matters referred to it by the Legislative Assembly.³

Reports of the Auditor-General tabled in the Assembly are referred to the relevant portfolio committee for consideration.⁴

1.2 Role of the Auditor-General

The role of the Auditor-General is to provide Parliament with independent assurance of public sector accountability and performance. This is achieved through reporting to Parliament on the results of its financial and performance audits.

1.3 Referral

On 29 October 2013, Report No. 4 of 2013-14 of the Queensland Audit Office: *Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community* (2013 Follow up Report) was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The report was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee of the 54th Parliament for consideration.

The Committee of the Legislative Assembly in the 54th Parliament did not as a matter of course set reporting requirements when referring Auditor-General reports to portfolio committees. The former committee did not report on the 2013 Follow Up Report during the 54th Parliament.

The 2013 Follow Up Report was re-referred to the current committee at the commencement of the 55th Parliament on 27 March 2015.

² *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, section 88, and Standing Order 94.

³ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, section 92.

⁴ Standing Order 194B.

Examination

1.4 2011 Report

Background

The committee's task was to consider the Auditor General's findings in the 2013 Follow Up Report in relation to the management of offenders in the community under parole and court orders by Queensland Corrective Services (QCS). The *Corrective Services Act 2006* defines the purpose of corrective services as providing community safety and crime prevention through the humane containment, supervision and rehabilitation of offenders.⁵ At the time the 2013 Follow Up Report was written, QCS was a division of the then Department of Community Safety. QCS is now a division within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (department).

The 2013 Follow Up Report examines the progress of QCS in implementing seven recommendations made following a performance management systems audit conducted in 2011 on the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of its systems and procedures for the management of offenders in the community. The Auditor-General's initial report on the 2011 Audit was tabled on 25 February 2011 (2011 Report).⁶

As emphasised in the 2011 Report, a key purpose of community based supervision is to provide offenders with:

... opportunities to remain integrated with society, develop community support, transition from prison back to society, as well as maintain accommodation and employment... . The ability to efficiently, effectively and economically manage offenders serving their sentence in the community is essential in maintaining and raising the confidence of the Parliament, judiciary and the community in this method of corrective services.⁷

Conclusions in the 2011 Report

The 2011 Report concluded:

- QCS was adequate at measuring effectiveness at very high levels but not at operational or program levels
- Key performance measures were not reported consistently in external reports
- The evaluation of the effectiveness of offender management was not effective
- Transition of prisoners from prison to community supervision was not coordinated effectively
- Not all internal offender intervention programs were evaluated and no external programs were accredited nor evaluated for effectiveness
- There were delays of up to 12 months in training new case officers
- There was a significant gap in knowledge and workload between Brisbane and regional staff supervising offenders subject to orders under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003*.⁸

⁵ *Corrective Services Act 2006*, section 3(1).

⁶ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2011, *Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*.

⁷ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2011, *Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*, p 1.

⁸ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 3.

Recommendations made in 2011 Audit

The 2011 Report recommended that the then Department of Community Safety:

1. align public reporting to ensure greater consistency of key performance measures between the Service Delivery Statement, Annual Report and the performance information provided for the Report on Government Services
2. establish comprehensive processes and measures to evaluate the effectiveness of offender management, specifically for the aims of breaking the cycle of reoffending and improving community safety and confidence
3. establish processes to develop greater consistency in case load and legislative knowledge between the High Risk Offender Management Unit and Regional Case Managers
4. establish processes to improve coordination of services between Custodial Operations and the Probation and Parole Directorate, including the evaluation of the effectiveness of Transitional Coordinators
5. ensure all staff at all levels of offender management receive timely and sufficient training, before, or immediately on commencing duties
6. develop strategies to provide a staff mix that better reflects the offender diversity in accordance with Section 6.7 of the *Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia-revised 2004*, and
7. ensure accreditation and evaluation of all intervention programs and continue the development of Indigenous programs to ensure relevance and effectiveness.⁹

1.5 2013 Follow Up Report

The follow-up audit, as detailed in the 2013 Follow Up Report, found that QCS had taken various steps to address all seven recommendations of the 2011 Report. Four recommendations (being recommendations 1, 3, 4 and 5) had been implemented fully and progress had been made on the remaining three recommendations (recommendations 2, 6 and 7). The 2013 Follow Up Report indicated that the three partially completed recommendations were more difficult than those already complete, and related to more complex issues such as program evaluation and staff workloads.

The committee notes the following key findings and issues identified in the 2013 Follow Up Report.

Key findings

- QCS had implemented four of the recommendations and partially implemented the remaining three
- The percentage of offenders returning to prison and community corrections had increased to more than 34 percent¹⁰
- Because QCS had not delivered on six components of PRISM¹¹, it is unable to identify whether the intended benefits from resourcing and staffing changes are being achieved
- Queensland had the second highest offender to operational staff ratio in Australia and this is showing an upward trend while the national average is showing a downward trend

⁹ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2011, *Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*, p 5.

¹⁰ However, note that subsequent investigation by the committee, described further below, discovered that this data provided to the Auditor-General was incorrect.

¹¹ PRISM is a reference to the People, Resourcing, Innovation, Supervision, Management program.

- QCS had trialled and implemented biometric reporting to manage low risk offenders across Queensland without rigorous evaluation
- QCS programs to change offending behaviour of Indigenous and high risk offenders were yet to be evaluated in 2013, and
- Staff training had improved and waiting times had been reduced; however, the risk remained that staff with insufficient training are managing offenders.¹²

In its overall assessment of progress made by QCS, the Auditor-General made the following observations, all suggestive of a need for further improvement:

There is a range of factors which can, directly or indirectly, contribute to offenders returning to the corrections system. Some of these are within the control of QCS and many are outside its direct influence. Nevertheless, QCS can do more to effectively address those factors it does control and that were identified through the recommendations in Report to Parliament No 1 for 2011, such as program evaluation, staff training and workload.¹³

While QCS has been efficient in supervising offenders in the community, its effectiveness has not improved. The percentage of offenders returning to prison and community corrections within two years of completing their orders has continued to increase since the audit.¹⁴

The increasing offender to operational staff ratios, and a lower than national average daily cost of supervision, all have the potential to affect the quality of service provided to offenders.¹⁵

Evaluating the effectiveness of offender programs and interventions; ensuring workloads and training allow staff to provide quality service; providing effective support to prisoners transitioning to the community; and working toward a staff mix that better reflect offender diversity could improve the quality of offender management.¹⁶

The 2013 Follow Up Report also acknowledged concerted efforts had been made by QCS to improve consistency in legislative knowledge and workloads between regional and central offices. However, it also noted that despite these efforts there has been no reduction in regional caseloads for regional case managers responsible for high risk offenders.¹⁷

1.6 Agency response to 2013 Follow Up Report (October 2013)

The then Director-General of the former Department of Community Safety responded to the 2013 Follow Up Report on 24 October 2013. Whilst generally concurring with the Audit Office's assessment, the then Director-General queried:

- the finding that recommendations 5 and 6 are yet to be implemented fully, and

¹² Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 5.

¹³ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 1.

¹⁴ However, note that subsequent investigation by the committee, described further below, discovered that this data provided to the Auditor-General was incorrect.

¹⁵ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 5.

¹⁶ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 6.

¹⁷ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 14.

- whether the comments made on the regional case management workload for high risk offender management *'may not fully reflect the level of security given to the offenders under supervision and recent improvements in monitoring high risk sexual offenders in the community.'*¹⁸

In relation to recommendations 5 and 6, the Director-General outlined a range of specific steps and strategies taken by the agency to address the issues identified.¹⁹ Recommendation 5 was subsequently noted in the Report as having been fully implemented, following the response provided by the then Director-General.²⁰

1.7 Private Meetings with Auditor-General (March 2014 and May 2015)

On 19 March 2014, the committee of the 54th Parliament held a private meeting with QAO officers in relation to the 2013 Follow Up Report. As noted above, subsequent to this meeting, machinery of government changes saw QCS move to become a unit within the department.

Shortly afterwards, the 2013 Follow Up Report was referred to the current committee on 27 March 2015. The current committee were briefed on the 2013 Follow Up Report in a private session by the Auditor-General and Mr Darren Brown from the Queensland Audit Office. At this meeting held in May 2015, the Auditor-General advised that there were still three recommendations that had not been fully implemented, being recommendations 2, 6 and 7.

The committee then wrote to the department, where QCS is now located, seeking advice as to the implementation of the 2011 Report recommendations in light of the 2013 Follow Up Report. Specific questions were also asked about evaluations, cost effectiveness and staffing matters.

1.8 Further Agency Response (June 2015)

The department responded to the committee's questions on 19 June 2015. The response is at Attachment A.

The committee had asked QCS to provide further information regarding the partially implemented recommendations:

- In its response concerning recommendation 2, the department described processes and measures to ensure the effectiveness of offender management, including practitioner development forums, internal management reviews and file controls reviews and practice supervision.
- In its response to recommendation 7, the department reported that it continued to monitor the quality of intensive offender programs and used evidence based standards to determine which should be delivered.

The department also addressed each of the specific questions raised in correspondence with the committee.

The committee noted that the department's response suggested a lack of formal evaluation processes in respect of offender management. While references were made to 'research' findings, 'evidence based standards' to determine programs delivered in correctional centres, and the monitoring of the quality of intensive offender programs, no evidence was provided in respect of these aspects.

1.9 Public briefing from department (October 2015)

After considering the department's response, the committee decided to invite the department to brief it, and answer questions, in respect of the 2013 Follow Up Report. This further briefing was held on 14 October 2015.

¹⁸ Letter from the Director-General, Department of Community Safety to the Auditor-General dated 24 October 2013, p 1.

¹⁹ For more detailed information, please refer to the Director-General's response in the 2013 Follow Up Report, p 17.

²⁰ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4: 2013-14, *Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community*, p 7 (Figure 2A- Implementation status of recommendations).

The key issue that emerged from the briefing was that the Queensland figures included in Fig 2B of the 2013 Follow Up Report were apparently incorrect. These figures related to community corrections offenders who had returned to corrective services under sentence within two years. Additionally, it transpired at the briefing that there was also possibly an anomaly in the protocol used to collate the data to provide the figures to the Auditor-General. The department agreed to provide this information on notice.

On 19 October 2015, the department wrote to the committee to advise that:

The Department reports on four measures of recidivism in the Report on Government Services (RoGS). These are rates of return under sentence within two years of discharge for prisoners returning to prison, prisoners returning to corrective services (prison or community corrections), offenders returning to community corrections and offenders returning to corrective services (prison or community corrections). The Auditor-General's 2013 follow-up report cites the latter: that is offenders returning to corrective services.

While preparing these data for the 2015 RoGS in October 2014, the Department discovered anomalies in the specialised computer program script and protocols used to extract data from the Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS) data base. ...

The Department was not able to resolve these issues before the 2015 RoGS data were published. In the interests of accuracy, the Department did not publish data in the category 'offenders returning to corrective services (prison and/or community corrections)' for that year.

The Auditor-General's 2013 follow-up report cites data provided by the Department which were affected by this error in the data extraction process. In regard to my comments at the briefing about the rates cited in figure 2B, at p 8, of Report No. 4 (2013), I erroneously advised the Committee that the return to community corrections and return to corrective services rates had been aggregated. In fact, data reported by the Queensland Audit Office are as reported by the Department in RoGs for those years.

Using the revised protocols, the result for 2012-13 for Queensland in figure 2B is 15.7%. I can confirm that the Auditor-General has not been given this advice.²¹

1.10 Committee correspondence with the Auditor-General (November 2015)

On 5 November 2015, the committee advised the Auditor-General of the outcome of the public briefing and the follow up correspondence from the department outlining the data anomalies and the incorrect information which had been provided to the Auditor-General. This incorrect information had caused the Auditor-General to report based on a significantly higher return rate for Queensland in terms of community corrections offenders who returned to corrective services under sentence within two years than was actually the case.

The committee outlined to the Auditor-General its concern that the provision of incorrect data to his office and potentially also to the Productivity Commission over a period of time may have significant implications in terms of decisions that may have been made using that data. The committee also indicated that it could not be confident that other data relating to offender management is accurate.

Accordingly, the committee sought the views of the Auditor-General as to the seriousness of the matter with particular regard to potential implications of this data having been incorrectly provided for some time, and to the integrity of the information systems used to support offender management. The committee also requested the Auditor-General to consider undertaking an audit of data and evaluation systems used in respect of offender management and corrective services more broadly.

²¹ Letter dated 19 October 2015 from the department to the committee.

1.11 Auditor-General's response to the committee (February 2016)

The Auditor-General responded on 8 February 2016. He advised the committee that, after making preliminary inquiries of QCS about the issues raised in the committee's letter, a broader audit of the QCS offender management data was warranted. The Auditor-General advised that as a result of the committee's oversight review of the 2013 Follow Up Report, he had brought forward the crime statistics audit and expanded it to be an audit of the use and reliability of criminal justice system data.

The objective of this audit is to determine whether the state's criminal justice data is reliable and used cost effectively. The availability and reliability of crime and sentencing statistics is important to measure and monitor the effectiveness of Queensland's justice system. It can also be used to inform policy decisions.

The audit will address the objective through the following lines of inquiry and criteria:

- criminal justice data is reliable
- relevant criminal justice data is integrated and accessible only to criminal justice agencies that need it
- criminal justice data is used effectively by criminal justice agencies.

This audit has now commenced and will assess data from the:

- Queensland Police Service
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and
- Queensland Corrective Services.²²

1.12 Further private meeting with Auditor-General meeting (20 April 2016)

In light of the developments outlined above, the committee determined that before issuing its report on the 2013 Follow Up Report, it should meet again with the Auditor-General for a further briefing on the current situation. A private meeting was held on 20 April 2016. At this meeting, the Auditor-General informed the committee that he had commenced a performance audit to look at the use and reliability of criminal justice data across the criminal justice system and was working with the department in this regard. This audit is anticipated to be completed and reported upon by early December 2016.

Committee comment

The committee notes the Auditor-General's acknowledgement in the 2013 Follow Up Report that there are a range of factors which can, directly or indirectly, contribute to offenders returning to the corrections system, and that some of these factors are within the control of QCS and some are not. The committee also agrees with the Auditor-General's conclusion that QCS can do more to effectively address factors that are within its control, and that were identified in the 2011 Report, such as program evaluation, staff training and workload.²³

The committee also endorses the Auditor-General's comment that:

... the challenge for QCS is getting the balance right. Investing appropriately in services that reduce reoffending can pay significant dividends in total cost savings, by reducing the prison population and the numbers of offenders being supervised in the community.²⁴

²² Letter dated 8 February 2016 from the Auditor-General to the committee.

²³ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 1.

²⁴ Queensland Audit Office, Report to Parliament No. 4 2013-14, Follow up – Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community, p 1.

In the course of the committee's review of the Auditor-General's report, data anomalies were discovered in information provided by the department to the Auditor-General and which was used in the 2013 Follow Up Report.

The committee looks forward to the results of the current audit of the use and reliability of criminal justice system data, expected to be reported upon in December 2016.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends the House note this Report.

**Attachment A – Letter from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General
dated 19 June 2015**



Department of Justice and Attorney-General
Office of the Director-General

RECEIVED

23 JUN 2015

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY
SAFETY COMMITTEE

In reply please quote: 555157/4, 2908347

Your reference: 11.2.3, 081502013

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19 JUN 2015

Mr Mark Furner MP
Chair
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Mr Furner

Thank you for your letter dated 14 May 2015 regarding follow up of the *Report to Parliament 4: 2013-14 of the Queensland Audit Office, follow up - Management of offenders subject to supervision in the community* (the Report). I apologise for the delay in responding.

In order to assist Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee (the Committee), please find an update on recommendations two and seven of the Report, noting that you consider recommendations five and six closed.

Recommendation two: establish comprehensive processes and measures to evaluate the effectiveness of offender management, specifically for the aims of breaking the cycle of reoffending, improving community safety and confidence.

On 5 November 2012, Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) introduced the Next-Generation Case Management model and Operational Practice Guidelines (OPGs) to increase the effectiveness of offender management with the aim of breaking the cycle of reoffending and improving community safety.

The Next-Generation Case Management model and associated assessment tools enable staff to monitor offender's progression, risk and outcomes through the period of supervision. The dynamic assessments allow timely identification and implementation of actions to mitigate risk whilst improving offender outcomes and community safety.

To complement the roll out of the Next-Generation Case Management model, QCS developed a new suite of OPGs tailored to support an end-to-end offender management pathway. As part of this work, each OPG now contains direct linkages to the Probation and Parole Standards (Version 2) which form a part of the Statewide Operations Governance and Accountability Framework. Stating the purpose and standard on the guideline encourages staff to understand and review best practice principles and outcomes for effective offender management.

QCS has established comprehensive processes and measures to evaluate the effectiveness of offender management practices and currently undertakes the following operational activities:

- practitioner development forums - introduced in 2012 as a forum for practitioners to discuss and review the effectiveness of offender management strategies for improved offender outcomes;
- internal management reviews (IMRs) - provide a detailed review of the effectiveness of offender management for those offenders supervised by QCS. IMRs are conducted after significant events to identify strengths and deficits in offender management outcomes. A committee reviews the matters and determines if any further remedial action is required. Feedback is provided to staff for professional development; and
- file control reviews and practice supervision – are used by management to identify failure to comply with OPGs. An element of file control reviews focuses on quality offender management as demonstrated through skills supervision practice. Where gaps in quality offender management are identified these are addressed through training.

Recommendation seven: ensure accreditation and evaluation of all intervention programs and continue the development of Indigenous programs to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

QCS continues to monitor the quality of intensive offender programs and uses evidence based standards to determine which programs should be delivered. QCS does not evaluate programs delivered by non-QCS providers, such as programs offered in the community to offenders on community based orders.

For those programs delivered by QCS, an evaluation plan endorsed by the Board of Management allows determination of the initiatives or programs that will be prioritised for evaluation in the future if resources are available. Currently there are no evaluations planned for any other offending programs in 2015-16.

An internal review of QCS's Ending Offending and Ending Family Violence programs for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander offenders was undertaken in 2011 and 2012. As noted in the follow up report, this resulted in the development of a new program called Positive Futures, which addresses both substance abuse and violence (including domestic and family violence).

The Positive Futures Program commenced in 2013-14 and is currently delivered across both custodial and community settings. The 36 hour program achieves best results when incorporated into a broader offender management and supervision framework.

Program accreditation processes continue to be utilised to ensure that programs delivered in correctional centres meet accepted internal standards of programs effective in reducing recidivism. Program accreditation processes for community referral programs are currently under review, to provide more flexibility, autonomy and responsiveness at the local level.

Work is currently underway to examine the overall effectiveness of offender management processes (of which referral to community programs is one part) through the development of a recidivism index.

In relation to the questions raised in your correspondence, I am pleased to provide you with the following information.

1. Has QCS chosen to collect information from returning offenders in order to assess the effectiveness of past interventions?

QCS works within an evidence based case management framework, which supports the referral of prisoners and offenders to a range of programs, services and/or interventions. As a part of this framework, QCS collects self-reported information about the effectiveness of prior interventions from offenders returning to community based supervision. This information is used to inform the offender management plan, referrals to interventions and case management practices. Research suggests all elements of the case management framework contribute to reducing risk of reoffending, making it difficult to determine the independent effects of any single aspect.

2. Please provide an update of the progress of the Offender Reintegration Model and steps taken to assess its effectiveness.

QCS continues to apply the Offender Reintegration Model across custodial and probation and parole settings.

The increase in prisoner numbers and changes to mean time in custody has placed pressure on the Offender Reintegration Model in its current form. The average duration of stay is approximately five to six months, with the most common duration being one to two months. Due to resourcing constraints only approximately 30-40% of prisoners released from a correctional centre are able to access the model.

QCS is currently reviewing the efficiency of the Offender Reintegration Model to better embed the model across both correctional centre and community based offender planning and case management. Recently QCS has trialled community placement of Transitions Co-ordinators in some probation and parole offices.

Funded transitional support services, which form an integral part of the Offender Reintegration Model are also currently under review to improve effectiveness and outcomes. New models and services are expected to be implemented in 2016-17, subject to availability of funding.

3. Please provide a further update on the workload of probation and parole officers and comment on the effect this is having on case management.

Since 2013 the population of offenders subject to community based supervision has been steadily rising. In 2012-13 the average total offender population was approximately 14,889. As at April 2015, the average total offender population is approximately 16,191 showing a marked increase of 1,302 offenders.

The Report on Government Services 2015 offender to operational staff ratio (Ref: Table 8A.22 – Community corrections offender-to-staff ratios, 2013-14) reveals an increase in the number of offenders to staff from 2011-12 (30.5) to 2012-13 (35.5) and then a decrease in 2013-14 (34.4).

Despite a growing offender population, QCS has continued to exceed successful order completion targets for the past three fiscal years with 73% of orders successfully completed in 2011-12, 75% in 2012-13 and 76% in 2013-14.

In 2014 QCS undertook two key projects to ensure available resources are used as efficiently as possible and better support staff. The projects included:

- State-wide implementation of biometric reporting which provided a combination of reporting options that may make up an offender's reporting regime. The automated system provides efficiencies in monitoring compliance based elements of supervision, which allows face-to-face contacts to focus on quality case management. Currently 1,819 offenders are enrolled in biometric reporting; and
- completion of the practice review project, a three month project which examined, identified and implemented available and suitable efficiencies in service delivery. The project targeted overly administrative tasks, reviewed level of service allocation to provide efficiency and align with contemporary research and redesigned management tools within the Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS) to improve productivity.

4. Please comment on the effectiveness of programs in relation to reoffending.

QCS continues to monitor the quality of intensive offender programs, and uses evidence based standards to determine which programs should be delivered in correctional centres.

Programs continue to be targeted to prisoners who are at high risk of re-offending and serving sentences of sufficient length to enable completion prior to parole eligibility. Most prisoners are not eligible for intensive criminogenic programs due to their relatively short duration of stay in custody.

In relation to evaluation of effectiveness, in 2013 QCS completed an internal re-evaluation of sexual offender programs, as recommended by Professor Stephen Smallbone in his initial evaluation of the sexual offending program suite in 2010. Positive outcomes in reducing recidivism were noted, though small sample sizes and low base rates of recidivism continue to make demonstration of clear outcomes challenging.

5. Please advise on the cost implications of offenders returning to the system.

The Report on Government Services 2015 (Ref: Table 8A.7 – Prisons: Net operating expenditure per prisoner per day – All Prisons, and Community Corrections: Net operating expenditure per offender per day) indicates the total net expenditure per prisoner per day is \$180.29 and \$13.21 for offenders supervised on a community based order.

As at 30 June 2014, two-thirds of prisoners (4,676 of 7,049 prisoners) in Queensland had been imprisoned under sentence previously.

6. Does QCS intend to evaluate the effectiveness of biometric reporting?

QCS acknowledges the benefits in monitoring the effectiveness of biometric reporting and will continue to review this reporting solution through monthly performance meetings with Argus Global (contracted supplier) and ongoing clear guidelines regarding suitability including biometrics in an offender's reporting regime.

7. Will there be a formal post-implementation review of Biometric reporting?

Biometric reporting, by itself, is not currently identified as an evaluation priority for QCS, due to limited internal capacity for evaluation projects. Biometric reporting is an element of the Next Generation Case Management model and may be included in any future review of that model.

8. Please comment on the diversity of new staffing recruits to the program.

QCS can confirm that 77% of probation and parole staff who complete the practitioner development program (PDP) are female and 23% are male. **Attachment 1** provides further details regarding the gender and age demographics of QCS staff as at 30 April 2015.

9. Has staff turnover decreased? What are the reasons for this?

As detailed overleaf in Table 1, probation and parole staff turnover has continued to decrease with 2014-15 figures reflecting a staff turnover rate of 8.9% across Queensland compared to 11% in 2012-13.

The decrease in staff turnover could be attributed to the use of a specialised recruiter ensuring complex screening and only employment of only the most appropriate applicants. Changes in the broader employment market may also be a contributing factor.

Table 1: permanent turnover - probation and parole - 1 May 2014 - 30 April 2015

Region	Turnover	Headcount start	Headcount end	Headcount average	Turnover rate
Brisbane	10	119	116	117.5	8.5%
Central	7	46	47	46.5	15.1%
Far Northern	3	61	66	63.5	4.7%
North Coast	3	64	65	64.5	4.7%
Northern	4	49	48	48.5	8.2%
South Coast	9	73	72	72.5	12.4%
Southern	6	57	56	56.5	10.6%
Grand Total	42	469	470	469.5	8.9%

10. Please provide an update on the time taken to train new recruits.

In 2011, QCS training waiting periods were up to 12 months. An analysis of training from January 2014 to May 2015 shows a total of 118 new staff completed the PDP. Out of 118 staff, 95.8% commenced the PDP (online training) on the first day of employment with QCS. The remaining 4.2% commenced training within three days of commencing employment. The online training consists of 36 hours of offender management related training and officers are not expected to supervise offenders within this time.

Out of 118 staff, 40.8% attended the face to face training within three months of employment with QCS, increasing to 78.2% within the first six months of employment. This demonstrates a significant improvement since the initial Queensland Audit Office (QAO) report in 2011.

There are a minority of staff who completed the program within six to 12 months, however, there is a direct causal link between high caseloads specified in the 2011 QAO report and the availability of staff attending training. Of those staff who did not attend training within the first six months of employment, 100% cited operational workload demands directly related to managing offenders as a reason for delayed attendance.

To encourage timeliness of training, QCS delivers four programs in a 12 month period to optimise the potential for staff to attend training as quickly as possible.

11. Can you please confirm that all reporting staff working with offenders under the DPSOA have completed specialist sexual offending risk assessment training?

QCS can confirm that all staff who currently supervise offenders in the community on orders made under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* (DPSOA) have completed specialist sexual offending risk assessment training.

12. Have improvements been made in the case loads of regional case managers.

Since 2013, QCS has implemented a new approach to managing the caseloads of regional case managers to ensure proportionate distribution of workloads. QCS has employed dedicated senior case managers to supervise offenders subject to orders under DPSOA.

In line with advice provided to QAO on 24 October 2013, QCS continues to distribute caseloads based on the number of case management hours associated with an offender. For example, an offender who has recently been released from custody, is seen twice weekly, is on stage 1-3 curfew, is more intensive and requires more case load hours than someone who is in maintenance and has been on their order for a number of years, being maintained on stage 5 curfew. Distributing caseload based on case management hours ensures that workloads of senior case managers are kept at a manageable level.

Should you require further information, please contact [REDACTED] Assistant Director-General, QCS, on [REDACTED], or at: [REDACTED]

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Mackie', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Mackie
Director-General

Enc.