



# QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT **COMMITTEES**

## **2024-25 Budget Estimates – Appropriation Bill 2024**



**Report No. 16, 57th Parliament  
Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee  
August 2024**

## **Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee**

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### **Acknowledgements**

The committee thanks:

- Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
- Minister for Police and Community Safety
- Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided by the departmental officers who contributed to the work of the committee during the estimates process.

## Contents

<b>Chair's foreword</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Role of the committee	1
1.2 Aim of this report	2
1.3 Participation by other Members	3
<b>2 Recommendation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3 Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Department of Justice and Attorney-General	6
3.1.1 Budget overview	6
3.1.2 Trends in Vote	8
3.1.3 Budget highlights	8
3.1.4 Capital program	8
3.2 Queensland Human Rights Commission	9
3.2.1 Budget overview	9
3.3 Crime and Corruption Commission	9
3.3.1 Budget overview	10
3.4 Legal Aid Queensland	10
3.4.1 Budget overview	10
3.5 Office of the Information Commissioner	11
3.5.1 Budget overview	11
3.6 Queensland Family and Child Commission	12
3.6.1 Budget overview	12
3.7 Prostitution Licensing Authority	12
3.7.1 Budget overview	13
3.8 Electoral Commission of Queensland	13
3.8.1 Budget overview	13
3.9 Office of the Queensland Ombudsman	14
3.9.1 Budget overview	14
3.10 Public Trustee of Queensland	15
3.10.1 Budget overview	15
3.11 Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Attorney-General	16
<b>4 Minister for Police and Community Safety</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1 Queensland Police Service	19
4.1.1 Budget overview	19
4.1.2 Trends in Vote	20
4.1.3 Budget highlights	20
4.1.4 Capital program	21
4.2 Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management	21
4.2.1 Budget overview	21
4.2.2 Trends in Vote	22

4.2.3	Key deliverables	22
4.2.4	Capital program	22
4.3	Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Minister of Police and Community Safety	23
<b>5</b>	<b>Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services</b>	<b>26</b>
5.1	Queensland Fire Department	26
5.1.1	Budget overview	26
5.1.2	Trends in Vote	27
5.1.3	Budget highlights	28
5.1.4	Capital program	28
5.2	Queensland Reconstruction Authority	28
5.2.1	Budget overview	29
5.3	Queensland Corrective Services	29
5.3.1	Budget overview	29
5.3.2	Trends in Vote	30
5.3.3	Budget highlights	30
5.3.4	Capital program	30
5.4	Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services	31
<b>6</b>	<b>Statement of Reservation</b>	<b>34</b>

## Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the budget estimates for the 2024-25 financial year.

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2024 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Each year, the budget estimates hearings provide the opportunity for all Members of Parliament to interrogate the government about the annual Appropriation Bill. This process helps provide Queenslanders with confidence in their government.

Queensland's economic performance over recent years has bolstered the government's ability to continue to manage a responsible budget while increasing spending where it matters most.

Appearing at her final Estimates hearing, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence answered questions in respect of her portfolio's plan for the year ahead. I note particularly the increases in funding to be used to work to end all forms of domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland and to provide support for victims of crime.

As the committee heard during examination for the portfolio area of police, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) continues its positive trend in recruitment to support its service of a growing population. The committee was also advised that the rate of offending in Queensland, including domestic violence offences, has declined.

The creation of a new agency - Marine Rescue Queensland – and having it and the State Emergency Service under the responsibility of the QPS will ensure that these vital agencies are appropriately supported into the future.

The bringing together of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and Rural Fire Service Queensland under the banner of the Queensland Fire Department will assist in protecting Queensland communities by ensuring that the firefighters and volunteers have the best available resources and legal protections. The budget provides them with more facilities and appliances for their important work.

This year's budget has a strong emphasis on responding to disasters. The committee heard about the additional frontline jobs in, and funding administered by, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. Funding will be used to rebuild after the challenging disaster season and to fortify our communities against future disasters.

Queensland Corrective Services continues to work to respond to the needs of an increased prisoner population in Queensland. In particular, I note the construction of the new Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre and the delivery of programs which aim to maximise rehabilitation and reduce recidivism.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Attorney-General, the Minister for Police and Community Safety and the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. In addition, I thank departmental officers for their cooperation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

I thank the members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution to the estimates process. I also thank the 9 Members of the Opposition and 2 Members of the crossbench who participated in the public hearing, providing additional scrutiny of the estimates.

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat, Hansard and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance throughout the estimates process.



**Peter Russo MP**  
**Chair**  
August 2024



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Role of the committee

The Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee (committee) is a portfolio committee of the Legislative Assembly which commenced on 13 February 2024 under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The committee's primary areas of responsibility are:

- Justice and Attorney-General
- Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
- Police
- Community Safety
- Fire
- Disaster Recovery
- Corrective Services.

On 14 June 2024, the Appropriation Bill 2024 and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.<sup>2</sup>

The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill 2024 the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the government's proposed expenditure.

The appropriation for 2024-25 is \$90,436,181,000.<sup>3</sup> The proposed expenditure across government by portfolio is shown in Figure 1 on page 2 of this report.

The committee's examination of the Appropriation Bill 2024 is in relation to the following portfolios:

- Justice and Attorney-General
- Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
- Police and Community Safety
- Fire and Disaster Recovery
- Corrective Services.

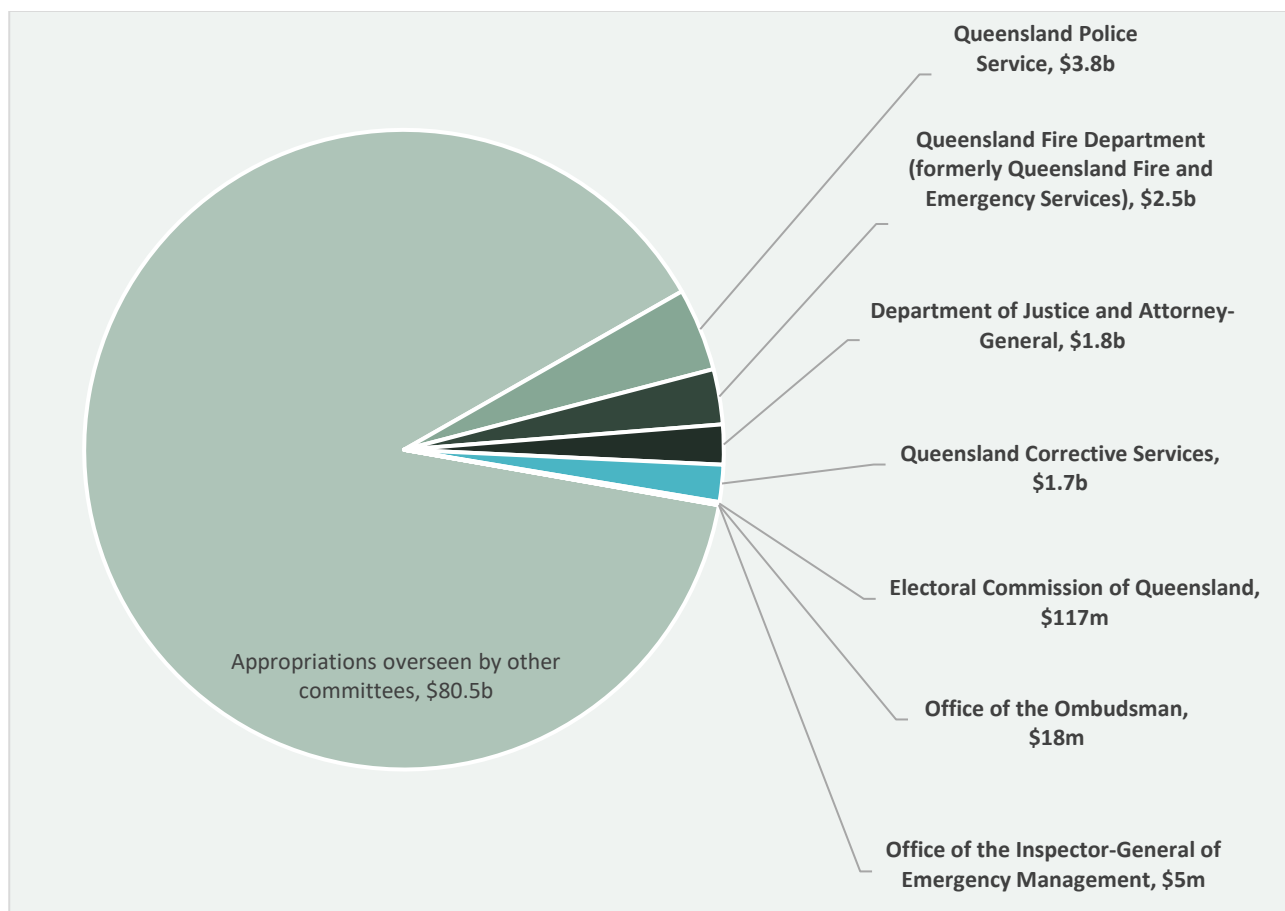
On 26 July 2024, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Attorney-General), the Minister for Police and Community Safety, and the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services and other witnesses. A copy of the transcript of the committee's hearing is available on the committee's webpage.

<sup>1</sup> *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 88; Standing Order 194.

<sup>2</sup> Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

<sup>3</sup> Appropriation Bill 2024, s 2.

**Figure 1:** Appropriation for 2024-25, \$90,436,181,000



Source: Appropriation Bill 2024.

## 1.2 Aim of this report

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined.

The committee considered information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- further information provided by the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services after the hearing.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Community Safety and the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all the questions were received.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice and documents tabled during the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.



### **1.3 Participation by other Members**

The following members of the crossbench gave notice of their proposed attendance at the hearing in accordance with the resolution of the House dated 14 June 2024:

- Mr Stephen Andrew MP, Member for Mirani
- Mr Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar

The committee gave leave for other (non-committee) Members of the Legislative Assembly to participate in the hearing.

In addition to Mr Andrew and Mr Berkman, the following non-committee Members participated in the public hearing sessions:

- Mr David Crisafulli MP, Leader of the Opposition and Member for Broadwater
- Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, Member for Kawana
- Ms Amanda Camm MP, Member for Whitsunday
- Ms Laura Gerber MP, Member for Currumbin
- Mr Dale Last MP, Member for Burdekin
- Ms Ann Leahy MP, Member for Warrego
- Mr Jim McDonald MP, Member for Lockyer
- Mr Tim Nicholls MP, Member for Clayfield
- Mr Dan Purdie MP, Member for Ninderry

## 2 Recommendation

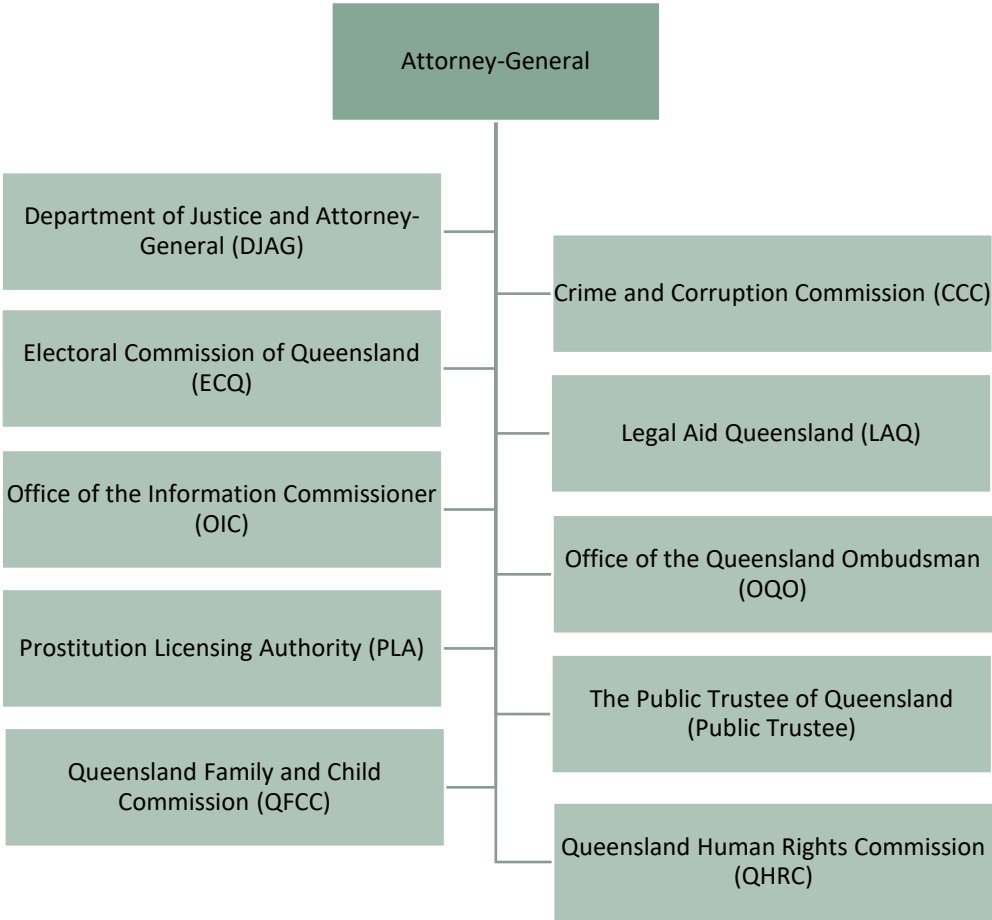
Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the committee must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

### **Recommendation 1**

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2024 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

3 Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

The Attorney-General has responsibility for the following entities:<sup>4</sup>



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the following persons were present at the hearing on 26 July 2024:<sup>5</sup>

- Chairperson of the CCC
- Electoral Commissioner
- Human Rights Commissioner
- Information Commissioner
- Chief Executive Officer of LAQ
- Public Trustee
- Principal Commissioner of the QFCC
- Chairperson of the PLA

<sup>4</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, Service Delivery Statements (SDS), Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG), pp i-ii.

<sup>5</sup> Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

- Queensland Ombudsman and Inspector of Detention Services.

### 3.1 Department of Justice and Attorney-General

DJAG's strategic objectives are to:

- continually improve and evolve its service delivery
- safeguard the rights of all people in society, including supporting and protecting vulnerable Queenslanders and victims of crime
- reduce over-representation of First Nations peoples in the justice system
- end domestic, family and sexual violence and improve women's safety
- minimise gambling harm.<sup>6</sup>

DJAG's key deliverables for 2024-25 include:

- implementing the women's safety and justice reform program
- implementing the Courts and Tribunals Digitisation Program
- continuing the Court Link program
- delivering the government's legislative program
- evaluating the Fast Track Sentencing Pilot
- implementing a best practice consumer complaint management and conciliation framework
- supporting key reforms relating to the implementation of the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023*
- progressing initiatives to increase engagement of First Nations peoples in the blue card system, particularly in remote communities
- commencing 5-yearly suitability reviews of Queensland casinos
- working with the Safer Gambling Advisory Committee to deliver the *Gambling Harm Minimisation Plan for Queensland 2021–2025* and implementing responses to the Queensland Audit Office's 2024 *Minimising Gambling Harm* audit report.<sup>7</sup>

#### 3.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises of \$1.343 billion in departmental expenditure and \$563 million in funding to be administered by DJAG on behalf of the state.<sup>8</sup>

The proposed \$1.343 billion in departmental expenses represents an increase of \$221.5 million on the Estimated Actual for 2023-24.<sup>9</sup>

The DJAG Service Delivery Statements (SDS) state the increase is primarily due to additional or increased funding for initiatives including:

- the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence sector
- implementation of the Domestic and Family Violence foundational training modules

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<sup>6</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 1.

<sup>7</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, pp 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 9.

<sup>9</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 11.

- support for victims of crime
- funding for the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- court reforms.<sup>10</sup>

The SDS also states that the increase reflects the transition of Forensic Science Queensland into the department, enterprise bargaining salary increases and funding being realigned to meet the operational requirements of DJAG.<sup>11</sup>

The estimated \$1.062 billion in administered expenses is a \$165.7 million increase on DJAG's 2023-24 estimated actual expenditure of \$895.8 million.<sup>12</sup> The increase in user charges and fees is primarily due to recognition of the Queen's Wharf Casino licence fee. There is also increased funding to support the community legal sector and victims of crime.<sup>13</sup>

To fund this budgeted expenditure, the Appropriation Bill 2024 proposes that DJAG receive a departmental appropriation of \$1.167 billion in 2024-25, with the remainder of the \$175.7 million in planned departmental spending to be financed through a combination of user charges and fees, grants and other contributions, interest and distributions from managed funds, and other revenue.<sup>14</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for DJAG for 2024-25, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for DJAG in 2023-24.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	942,824	962,275	1,167,157
equity adjustment	(41,958)	(52,738)	(26,304)
<i>Administered Items</i>	579,654	687,220	681,997
<b>Vote</b>	<b>1,480,520</b>	<b>1,596,757</b>	<b>1,822,850</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 12.

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 11.

<sup>11</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 11.

<sup>12</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 11.

<sup>13</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 11.

<sup>14</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 12.

### 3.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2024 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$million	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$million	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$million	2024/25 Estimates Sought \$million
	1,134,908	1,291,730	1,596,757	1,822,850
% Change	+13.82	+23.61	+14.16	

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 1, p 7; Appropriation Bill 2023, sch 1, p 7; Appropriation Bill 2022, sch 1, p 6.

### 3.1.3 Budget highlights

The 2024-25 budget highlights for DJAG include:<sup>15</sup>

<b>Strengthening support for victims of crime</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$299.3 million over 5 years and \$54.9 million ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting a 20 per cent increase in funding to Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence service providers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$154.4 million over 4 years and \$38.4 million per annum ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting the delivery of civil justice services to Queenslanders in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$73.1 million over 5 years and \$20.1 million per annum ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Mitigating demand on the Beenleigh and Townsville courthouses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$36 million over 4 years</li> </ul>
<b>Delivering Domestic and Family Violence foundational training modules and establishing a state-wide domestic and family violence training support and coordination service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$34.7 million over 6 years</li> </ul>

### 3.1.4 Capital program

The 2024-25 capital purchases of \$68.3 million includes continued investment of \$23.6 million for the ongoing program of capital works in courthouses, \$13.5 million to continue the replacement of the Beaudesert courthouse and \$11.2 million to expand and upgrade audio-visual technology capacity in the justice system.

It also includes \$9 million to continue to provide domestic and family violence courthouse improvements as part of the implementation of the Queensland Government's response to the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear her voice - Report One - Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 2.

<sup>16</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 10.

## 3.2 Queensland Human Rights Commission

The role of the QHRC is ‘to protect and promote freedom, respect, equality and dignity’.<sup>17</sup> In doing so, the QHRC’s objectives are to:

- support justice and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- promote access and inclusion
- work toward safer communities
- increase institutional transparency.<sup>18</sup>

### 3.2.1 Budget overview

The QHRC’s operating expenses for 2024-25 are estimated to be \$10.96 million, a decrease of \$0.65 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual.<sup>19</sup> The SDS states that ‘[a]dditional grant funding was received predominantly to support an interim increase in front line staff to clear the backlog of customer complaints received during the pandemic and to strengthen our ICT and cyber security infrastructure’.<sup>20</sup>

Key deliverables for the QHRC in 2024-25 are to:

- intervene where appropriate in proceedings involving human rights issues to provide expert assistance to courts and tribunals
- finalise the review of QHRC services and design processes and practices to provide a more culturally appropriate QHRC experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- publish reports on unresolved human rights complaints to encourage transparency and promote best practice decision making in government service delivery
- continue to work with key stakeholders within the child protection and youth justice systems to urge the embedding of human rights principles within existing frameworks and encourage increased understanding and compliance with human rights obligations
- maintain an effective complaints process to manage the assessment and resolution of complaints under both the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and *Human Rights Act 2019*, with a focus on reducing the current backlog of complaints and client wait-times
- work with the Queensland Government to implement recommendations following the government’s response to *Building Belonging – Review of Queensland’s Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*.<sup>21</sup>

## 3.3 Crime and Corruption Commission

The CCC is an independent agency established under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* to combat major crime and reduce corruption for the benefit of the Queensland community.<sup>22</sup>

The CCC’s objectives are to:

- deliver efficient and effective outcomes to reduce the incidence of major crime and corruption and improve the integrity of the public sector in Queensland

<sup>17</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 18.

<sup>18</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 18.

<sup>19</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 22.

<sup>20</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 21.

<sup>21</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 18.

<sup>22</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 25.

- be accessible and engage with the community in a meaningful way that demonstrates accountability and promotes confidence in the functions and services provided
- develop the capability and manage the wellbeing of its people and enable their performance through access to high-quality information and fit-for-purpose systems
- anticipate and respond effectively to the dynamic and challenging operating environment.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.3.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$78.5 million, an increase of nearly \$1 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$77.6 million. This increase is primarily due to the full year impact from the whole-of-government wages policy for the CCC's 382 full time equivalent (FTE) employees.<sup>24</sup>

In 2024-25, the CCC will focus on:

- investigating and shaping effective responses to serious and organised crime through the use of its hearing powers; working, and sharing intelligence, with the Queensland Police Service and other law enforcement partners and confiscating criminal profits
- investigating complaints which involve conduct which is serious, systemic or of strategic risk to trust and confidence in public institutions in Queensland
- implementing the recommendations from the *Commission of Inquiry relating to the Crime and Corruption Commission Report*
- developing critical organisational capabilities including digital, analytics, intelligence and workforce
- effectively engaging with stakeholders, partners and the community to promote a culture of transparency, accountability and confidence.<sup>25</sup>

## 3.4 Legal Aid Queensland

LAQ's purpose is to maintain the rule of law, protect legal rights, contribute to the fairness and efficiency of the justice system, and reduce the social impacts of legal problems.<sup>26</sup>

LAQ's objectives are to:

- provide quality and cost effective legal services to clients
- progress LAQ's vision through collaboration and policy leadership
- contribute to the administration of justice.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.4.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$302.4 million, an increase of \$36.1 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$266.3 million. This increase is primarily due to an increase in employee expenses and supplies and services expenses related to ongoing demand and service delivery growth.<sup>28</sup>

In 2024-25, LAQ will:

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<sup>23</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 25.

<sup>24</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 28.

<sup>25</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 25.

<sup>26</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 32.

<sup>27</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 32.

<sup>28</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, pp 35-36.



- continue to provide services in line with the requirements of the *National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020–2025* and Bilateral Schedule
- support early resolution of legal problems by delivering legal assistance including in collaboration with service delivery partners across the state in the most cost effective and innovative way
- lead policy issues affecting LAQ's service delivery and maintain its focus on financial sustainability and accountability
- ensure LAQ capably responds to people most at risk of social exclusion including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>29</sup>

### 3.5 Office of the Information Commissioner

The OIC's purpose is to be a contemporary regulator and independently uphold and promote information access and privacy rights.<sup>30</sup>

The OIC's objectives are to:

- uphold community rights to access government information through independent and timely reviews of agency decisions under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI Act) and *Information Privacy Act 2009* (IP Act)
- provide independent and timely privacy complaint mediation
- improve government services to the community by enhancing agency practices in right to information and information privacy
- promote greater awareness of right to information and information privacy to increase appropriate access to and protection of information.<sup>31</sup>

#### 3.5.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$12.2 million, an increase of \$0.2 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$12.0 million.<sup>32</sup>

In 2024-25, consistent with recommendations of the *Let the sunshine in: Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector* and the independent *Strategic Review of the Office of the Information Commissioner 2022*, the OIC will:

- continue to champion enduring cultural change in the public sector for transparent and accountable government
- continue to implement reforms made to the IP Act and RTI Act under the *Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023* to strengthen information access and privacy frameworks
- continue to deliver significant investment in ICT resources to update, streamline and protect the OIC's information management, monitoring and reporting processes and activities
- consider findings and data gathered through a workforce review for a future-fit OIC to ensure it is structured and resourced to meet and improve the delivery of its statutory functions under the IP Act, RTI Act and other corporate requirements as a public sector entity.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 32.

<sup>30</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 39.

<sup>31</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 39.

<sup>32</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 43.

<sup>33</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 39.

### 3.6 Queensland Family and Child Commission

The QFCC's purpose is to influence change that improves the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's children and their families.<sup>34</sup>

The QFCC's objectives are to:

- ensure systems are accountable for the impact they have on children and families
- raise awareness and advocate for children and their families
- empower children and their families to influence decisions that affect their lives
- support, connect and collaborate with organisations that advance the rights, safety and wellbeing of children.<sup>35</sup>

#### 3.6.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$14 million, an increase of \$0.5 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$13.5 million.<sup>36</sup>

In 2024-25, the QFCC will:

- ensure systems are accountable for the impact they have on children and families by delivering on system reviews as outlined in the *QFCC Oversight Workplan 2023–27*
- empower children and their families to influence decisions that affect their lives by continuing to support the QFCC Youth Advocate Network and engaging young people and parents in the submissions made to Parliament and conduct community and workforce surveys
- expand opportunities for youth participation in government decision-making processes
- support, connect and collaborate with organisations that advance the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children
- influence change that improves the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's children and their families through the implementation of the child death prevention *Safer Pathways Through Childhood 2024–25* action plan
- enable the Child Death Review Board to carry out systems reviews following child deaths connected to the child protection system and make recommendations for system improvements.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.7 Prostitution Licensing Authority

The purpose of the PLA is to administer the prostitution licensing and advertising regime in compliance with the *Prostitution Act 1999* and Prostitution Regulation 2014.<sup>38</sup>

The objectives of the PLA are to:

- make the community safer by:
  - supporting the implementation of a decriminalised sex work industry for Queensland
  - collaborating with the licensed sector to reduce risk of crime, including trafficking, coercion and money laundering

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<sup>34</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 47.

<sup>35</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 46.

<sup>36</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 49.

<sup>37</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 46.

<sup>38</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 53.

- promoting health and safety standards at licensed brothels
- strengthen stakeholder relationships by:
  - delivering a consultative and supportive regulation compliance regime
  - improving administrative processes to deliver more responsive client services.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.7.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$1.79 million, an increase of \$0.15 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$1.63 million.<sup>40</sup>

In 2024-25, the PLA will:

- improve its operations and processes to better support understanding by the licensed sector of their obligations
- support implementation of the *Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024*.<sup>41</sup>

## 3.8 Electoral Commission of Queensland

The ECQ's purpose is to deliver accessible, fair and transparent electoral services for all Queenslanders.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.8.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$116.6, an increase of \$41.6 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$75.0 million. This increase is due to the delivery of the 2024 State general election in October 2024 and subsequent election funding claims that will be processed to eligible electoral participants, and commencement of the review of state electoral boundaries by the Queensland Redistribution Commission.<sup>43</sup>

In 2024-25, the ECQ will:

- deliver the 2024 State general election
- undertake post-election compliance and evaluation activities for the 2024 local government quadrennial elections
- monitor compliance with state and local government funding and disclosure obligations
- prepare to deliver a redistribution of state electoral boundaries by the Queensland Redistribution Commission
- provide support to the Local Government Change Commission in its reviews of local government boundaries and electoral arrangements.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 53.

<sup>40</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 57.

<sup>41</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 53.

<sup>42</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 61.

<sup>43</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 65.

<sup>44</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 61.

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 compares the appropriations for the ECQ for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	73,859	72,449	116,570
equity adjustment	1,963	1,963	(37)
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>75,822</b>	<b>74,412</b>	<b>116,533</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 15.

### 3.9 Office of the Queensland Ombudsman

The purpose of the OQO is to improve public administration by:

- investigating administrative decisions
- helping agencies improve their practices
- overseeing the system of Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs)
- improving detention services.<sup>45</sup>

#### 3.9.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$17 million, an increase of \$2.4 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$14.6 million. This increase is mainly due to higher employee expenses in the expansion of the Improving Detention Services Function and additional FTEs to enhance complaints and investigations management capacity of the OQO.<sup>46</sup>

In 2024-25, the OQO will:

- continue to deliver services that help people to know how and when to make a complaint
- provide a free and independent investigation service that reviews administrative actions of state government departments and agencies (including state schools and TAFE), local councils and public universities
- help agencies to improve their decision-making, administrative practices and PID management by making recommendations for improvement, delivering training programs and providing information and advisory services
- inspect places of detention and make recommendations to improve detention services.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 73.

<sup>46</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 77.

<sup>47</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 73.

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 compares the appropriations for the OQO for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	14,426	14,640	16,956
equity adjustment	460	227	1,183
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>14,886</b>	<b>14,867</b>	<b>18,139</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 16.

### 3.10 Public Trustee of Queensland

The Public Trustee's purpose is to provide financial decision-making advocacy, education and services and empower Queenslanders to plan and prepare for key life events.

The Public Trustee's objectives include:

- delivering an empathetic service and experience that puts customers first
- community engagement that informs, improves and promotes the rights, choices and wishes of Queenslanders.<sup>48</sup>

#### 3.10.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$134.88 million, an increase of \$12.84 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$122.04 million.<sup>49</sup> This increase is largely due to an increase in employee expenses and an increase in finance and borrowing costs associated with interest payable to customers for deposits held in the Public Trustee's Common Fund.<sup>50</sup>

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Public Trustee has an operating deficit of \$36.60 million, up from the Estimated Actual deficit of \$6.63 million in 2023-24. This is due to matters including a reduction in revaluation gain on investments, a reduction in grants and other contributions, and a decrease in user charges and fees.<sup>51</sup>

In 2024-25, the Public Trustee will:

- continue to advance customer experience initiatives under the *Customers First Strategy*, including building relationships with stakeholder and advocacy groups and support services to empower customers with their financial matters
- establish a new Customer Support Team to increase customer service efficiency and enable greater support for customers in complex matters
- continue to work towards simplifying the Public Trustee's fees and charges structure for key services deliver, so that it is easier for its customers to understand

<sup>48</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 85.

<sup>49</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 91.

<sup>50</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 90.

<sup>51</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 90.

- continue to collaborate, engage with, and consider advice from key stakeholders, including the Public Trustee Advisory and Monitoring Board
- promote positive and collaborative engagement between customers' support networks and the Public Trustee
- finalise ICT and digital strategies that will support modern, secure and human-centred business systems and solutions.<sup>52</sup>

### 3.11 Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Attorney-General

The committee considered a range of matters in relation to the estimates for DJAG and associated statutory entities (CCC, ECQ, LAQ, OIC, OQO, PLA, the Public Trustee, QFCC and the QHRC). These are summarised below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for DJAG and associated statutory entities included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Management of cases reviewed as part of the historical case review recommended by the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland	QoN 1, QoN 2, pp 27-29
Recovery of costs in the Trad matter	QoN 3, pp 4-5
Implementation of recommendations from the QFCC's <i>Keeping Queensland's Children More than Safe: Review of the Blue Card System</i> report	QoN 4, QoN 11, p 21
Costs for consultants for work related to the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce	QoN 5
Costs of education and training in respect to new coercive control offence	QoN 6
Number of frontline domestic violence workers appointed under the Federal Funding Agreement	QoN 7, pp 35-38
Management of high risk perpetrators by the Domestic Violence High Risk Team	QoN 8
Allocation of additional funding to victims of crime	QoN 9, pp 3, 26
Dedicated domestic and family violence court on Sunshine Coast	QoN 10
Implementation of casino reforms	QoN 12
Integration of digital technologies in Queensland's courts and tribunals	QoN 13
Response to increasing demand on the Coroners Court of Queensland	QoN 14
Initiatives implemented to reduce demand on the criminal justice system	QoN 15

<sup>52</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, DJAG, p 85.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for DJAG and associated statutory entities included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Number of applications for financial assistance received by Victim Assist Queensland, including the numbers finalised and the average processing time	QoN 16
Transition of Forensic Science Queensland to DJAG	QoN 17
Implementation of recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reports	QoN 18, Crossbench QoN 2
Delivery of the 2024 State General Election by the ECQ	QoN 19, pp 17-18
Support provided to community legal centres to address workforce pressures	QoN 20, p 34
Implementation of a police integrity unit as recommended by <i>A call for change: Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence</i>	Crossbench QoN 1, pp 11-13, 19
Costs incurred by the CCC in the Carne case <sup>53</sup>	pp 4-5, 18
Impact on the High Court decision in the Carne case on the CCC's reporting powers	pp 5-8
Investigation of allegations regarding employees of Queensland Health Forensic and Scientific Services by the CCC	pp 8-9
Government's response to persons using violence	pp 9-10
Support for domestic, family and sexual violence services in Queensland	pp 10, 26-27
Initiatives regarding prevention of family and domestic violence	pp 10-11
Interplay between children in youth justice system and child safety	pp 13-14
Investigations arising out of Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability	pp 14-15
Role of the Inspector of Detention Services	pp 15-16
Ban on political donations	pp 16-17
Privacy issues concerning postal votes	p 17
Use of commercial-in-confidence contracts and Professor Peter Coaldake AO's <i>Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector</i>	pp 17, 19-20
Number of restrictive practice decisions submitted to the Office of the Public Guardian	pp 17, 34-35

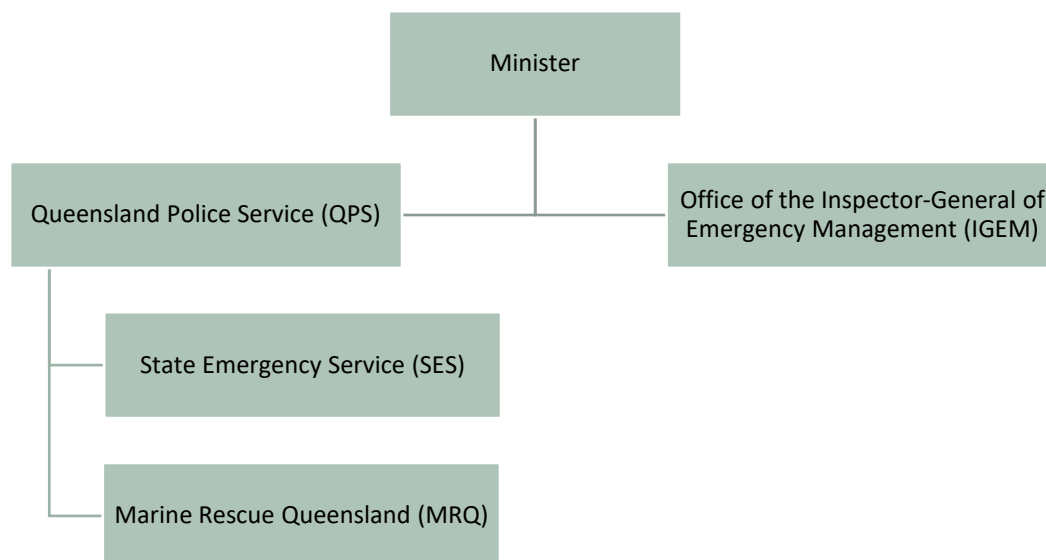
<sup>53</sup> *Crime and Corruption Commission v Carne* [2023] HCA 28.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for DJAG and associated statutory entities included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Complaints to the QHRC regarding the Queensland Police Service	pp 18, 35
Duty lawyer services provided by LAQ	p 19
Outcome of criminal trial of Aaron Harley James	p 20
Criminal trial of Ashley Griffith	pp 20-21
Appointment of magistrates and acting magistrates	pp 21-24
Response to increase demand for matters being heard by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal	pp 24-25
Gambling harm minimisation initiatives	pp 25-26
Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group	pp 29-30
Operation of safe night precincts	p 30
Investigation into Chow Tai Fook Enterprises and associated report	pp 30-31
Implementation of recommendations of the interim report of the youth justice inquiry regarding victims of crime	pp 31-32
Consideration of small place-based rehabilitation and assessment centres for youth offenders	p 32
Appointment of additional magistrates in respect of the Childrens Court and domestic violence matters	pp 32-33
Minimum qualifications of staff conducting blue card checks	pp 33, 35
Number of staff conducting blue card checks who identify as First Nations, disabled or from a culturally and linguistically diverse background	pp 33-34
Exclusion of material considered in inquiries by the Coroners Court of Queensland	p 34
Domestic violence perpetrator programs	pp 38-39
Non-lethal strangulation offences	p 39
Domestic and family violence workers embedded in Queensland police stations	pp 39-40
Implementation of recommendations from inquiry into scrap metal theft	p 40



## 4 Minister for Police and Community Safety

The Minister is responsible for the following agencies, services and statutory entities:<sup>54</sup>



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the QPS Commissioner and the Inspector-General of Emergency Management were present at the public hearing on 26 July 2024.<sup>55</sup>

### 4.1 Queensland Police Service

The objectives of the QPS are to:

- deliver effective and responsive policing and community safety
- provide better services through connected and trusted relationships
- deliver transformational reform, informed by insights, to innovate and strengthen QPS's capability to deliver community safety services.<sup>56</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises of \$3.7 billion in the QPS expenditure and \$14.1 million in funding to be administered by the QPS on behalf of the state.<sup>57</sup>

The proposed budget expense of \$3.695 billion in 2024-25 is an increase of \$289 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual. The increase is mainly due to the recruitment of additional police officers, enterprise bargaining arrangements and the transition of the SES from the Queensland Fire Department to QPS.<sup>58</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the QPS for 2024-25, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for the QPS in 2023-24.

<sup>54</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (IGEM), p i.

<sup>55</sup> Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

<sup>56</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 1.

<sup>57</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, pp 8, 10, 11.

<sup>58</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 10.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	3,118,097	3,306,907	3,446,270
equity adjustment	144,001	151,176	343,184
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>3,262,098</b>	<b>3,458,083</b>	<b>3,789,454</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 18.

#### 4.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2024 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$million	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$million	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$million	2024/25 Estimates Sought \$million
	2,560,099	2,773,556	3,458,083	3,789,454
<b>% Change</b>	+8.34	+24.68	+9.58	

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2023, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2022, sch 1, p 6.

#### 4.1.3 Budget highlights

The 2024-25 budget highlights for the QPS include:<sup>59</sup>

<p><b>Community Safety Plan for Queensland investment package which includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>900 additional police personnel including 500 police officers</li> <li>an additional 3000 metal detecting wands and 1000 next generation tasers</li> <li>increased police airborne capacity, including 2 helicopters for response work in Far North Queensland and Sunshine Coast/Wide Bay and new drone capability in priority regions across Queensland</li> <li>an extension of the Youth-Co-responder Teams model for the Gold Coast, South Brisbane and Cairns and additional teams for the Sunshine Coast and South-West regions</li> <li>upgraded police facilities in Hervey Bay and Bundaberg</li> <li>new Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) for Caloundra and upgrades to the PCYC Redcliffe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1.28 billion</li> </ul>
--	--

<sup>59</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 2.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3.2 million over 4 years for Crime Stoppers Queensland, Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group, the Stop the Coward Punch Campaign and Neighbourhood Watch Queensland</li> </ul>	
Support non-government community organisations which provide services to keep Queenslanders safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$69.4 million over 5 years and \$14 million per annum ongoing</li> </ul>
Deliver extra police resources and community safety initiatives for the South-West Brisbane and Ipswich areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$36.5 million over 5 years and \$9.3 million per annum ongoing</li> </ul>
Build a sustainable and family-centred coronial system that meets the needs of all Queenslanders and improves community confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$13.2 million over 4 years and \$3.4 million per annum ongoing</li> </ul>
Modernise and upgrade the QPS's network of watchhouses to improve safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5.5 million</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.4 Capital program

The 2024-25 QPS capital program of \$684.2 million supports frontline services throughout Queensland. The program will fund aircraft acquisitions, facilities, motor vehicles, vessels, information and communications technology and other essential equipment.<sup>60</sup>

## 4.2 Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management

IGEM provides independent and valued assurance and insights to enhance Queensland's disaster management arrangements.<sup>61</sup>

### 4.2.1 Budget overview

IGEM's total expenses are estimated to be \$5.3 million in 2024-25, an increase of \$118,000 from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual. The increase is broadly associated with enterprise bargaining arrangements.<sup>62</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for IGEM for 2024-25, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for IGEM in 2023-24.

<sup>60</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 9.

<sup>61</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 18.

<sup>62</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 22.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	4,620	4,610	4,723
equity adjustment	..	..	..
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>4,620</b>	<b>4,610</b>	<b>4,723</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 16.

#### 4.2.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2024 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$million	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$million	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$million	2024/25 Estimates Sought \$million
	4,371	4,497	4,610	4,723
<b>% Change</b>		+2.88	+2.51	+2.45

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2023, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2022, sch 1, p 6.

#### 4.2.3 Key deliverables

In 2024-25, IGEM will:

- undertake reviews to provide assurance that the disaster management arrangements continue to keep communities safe
- partner with key stakeholders to deliver assurance activities that enhance disaster management capability across Queensland by promoting shared responsibility for all Queenslanders
- support inclusive engagement through all aspects of Queensland's disaster management arrangements providing future focussed, equitable and resilient disaster management arrangements
- broker cooperative partnerships that build pathways for future research programs to connect research expertise with real world problems to improve disaster management outcomes
- scope a comprehensive review of the disaster management standards to ensure they remain contemporary and fit for purpose.<sup>63</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Capital program

The 2024-25 Budget has no capital component for IGEM.

<sup>63</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QPS and IGEM, p 18.

### 4.3 Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Minister of Police and Community Safety

The committee considered a range of matters in relation to the estimates for QPS and IGEM. These are summarised below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QPS and IGEM included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Employment data regarding sworn police officers, including number of FTE employees, retirements, resignations, dismissals, newly sworn-in officers, other separations and vacant positions	QoN 1, pp 52-54
Special constables	QoN 2
Relocation bonus for officers with prior policing experience from other jurisdictions	QoN 2
Roadside police activities including random breath tests, saliva tests, traffic infringement notices and strength of roadside policing officers	QoN 3
Volunteers under responsibility of QPS in respect of restructuring of MRQ and SES	QoN 4, p 65
Transfer of Coast Guard and volunteer MRQ units to QPS	QoN 4, QoN 14, pp 60, 61-63, 67
Details of the Executive Leadership Team including members, vacancies and meetings	QoN 5, p 44
Management of young offenders in Queensland watchhouses	QoN 6, p 56
Deployment and costs of Operation Whiskey Legion	QoN 7
Police officer staffing numbers at Southport, Ipswich, Bundaberg, Kirwin and Townsville police stations	QoN 8
Allocation of police officers to Noosa region	QoN 9
Youth bail applications and appeals	QoN 10, QoN 15
Increase to officer and civilian personnel in the QPS	QoN 11, pp 52-54, 60
Funding allocation for the QPS	QoN 12
Introduction of budgeted FTE roles for the SES	QoN 13
Progress of 2023-24 Severe Weather Season Review by IGEM	QoN 17
Youth offender rates in Queensland	QoN 18
Implementation of QPS-led domestic and family violence reforms	QoN 19, pp 58-59

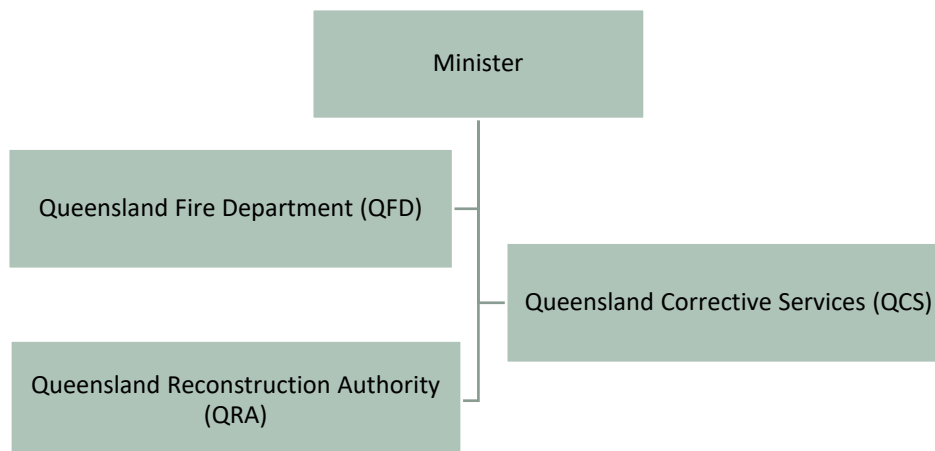
Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QPS and IGEM included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Outcomes from PCYC Back to Basics program	QoN 20
Use of force by members of the QPS involving OC spray, <sup>64</sup> tasers and firearms	Crossbench QoN 1
First Nations Advisory Group to the QPS	Crossbench QoN 2
Travel undertaken by the Police Commissioner	pp 44-48
Disclosure to perpetrators of victims' private information	pp 48-49, 50-52
Allegations of criminal activity involving the CFMEU	pp 49-50
Impacts of leave on staff resourcing in the QPS	p 55
Expansion of the Youth Co-Responder Team	p 55
Accuracy of victim data	p 55
Mandatory retirement age of sworn police officers	pp 56-57
QPS responses to gang violence and drug-related crime	p 57
New PCYC in Caloundra South	p 57
Innovations in first aid equipment carried by police officers	pp 57-58
Increase in funding for coronial system	p 58
Outcomes of QPS-led disaster management	p 59
Blue card status of MRQ volunteers and personnel	pp 61, 64
Status of Blue Water Review	p 62
Vessel delivered to Torres Strait Volunteer Marine Rescue unit	p 63
Payment of traffic fines incurred by a person driving a Volunteer Marine Rescue unit vehicle	p 63
Qualifications of MRQ staff to deploy	p 64
Compliance of Coast Guard and MRQ buildings with government standards	pp 64-65
Attrition of SES volunteers	pp 65-66

<sup>64</sup> Oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray is also known as pepper spray.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QPS and IGEM included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Blue card status of SES volunteers	p 66
Training status of SES volunteers	p 66
QPS human resources oversight of SES personnel	p 67
Training status of Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) chairs	pp 67
Removal of vegetation within striking distance of dwellings in Gold Coast region	p 68
Implementation of recommendations of the <i>K'gari (Fraser Island) bushfire review report 1</i>	pp 68-69
Capability of LDMGs	p 69
Assessment of local disaster management plans by IGEM	pp 69-70
Feedback mechanism for SES volunteers	pp 70-71
Role of schools and cadets in increasing volunteering numbers	p 71
Interplay between IGEM and other agencies in respect of Queensland's disaster management arrangements	pp 71-72
IGEM's monitoring, evaluation and reporting program	p 72
Delivery of Marine Rescue Vessel Replacement Program	pp 72-73
Role of chief officer of MRQ and vision for MRQ as a part of QPS	pp 72-74
Funding for SES resources and equipment	p 74
Vision for SES as a part of QPS	pp 74-75

## 5 Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services

The Minister is responsible for the following agencies, services and statutory entities:<sup>65</sup>



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the QFD Commissioner, Chief Executive Officer of the QRA and the QCS Commissioner were present at the hearing on 26 July 2024.<sup>66</sup>

### 5.1 Queensland Fire Department

Effective from 1 July 2024, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services was re-named to the QFD, and it comprises of the following functions: Queensland Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) and State Operations.<sup>67</sup>

The purpose of the QFD is to pre-empt, prevent, mitigate and manage the consequences of fires and other emergencies on Queensland communities.<sup>68</sup>

The QFD's strategic objectives are to ensure:

- planning, decision-making and QFD-led preparedness activities are informed by current and future risk
- communities are well informed and take necessary actions relevant to their local risk
- safe and effective response that minimises the consequences of fires and emergencies
- connecting and supporting the QFD's people, partners and communities in recovery after fires and emergencies.<sup>69</sup>

#### 5.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises \$987.4 million in QFD income in 2024-25, which is a decrease of \$18.9 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual. The decrease is mainly due to additional income received in 2023-24 to reimburse the significant response to bushfire and severe weather disaster events.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, Queensland Fire Department (QFD), p i; Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, Queensland Corrective Services (QCS), p i.

<sup>66</sup> Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

<sup>67</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 1.

<sup>68</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 1.

<sup>69</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 1.

<sup>70</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 6.



Total expenses are estimated to be \$960.8 million in 2024-25. This is a \$28.9 million decrease from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual. The decrease is mainly due to additional expenditure in 2023-24 associated with operational response for bushfire and severe weather disaster events during 2023-24, and the redirection of funding to support the continued uplift in the RFSQ capital program.<sup>71</sup> The estimated operating surplus of \$26.6 million in 2024-25 is required to fund the delivery of the QFD capital program.<sup>72</sup>

The administered expenses for 2024-25 mainly represent 12 months of grants and subsidies payments to the QPR to fund its disaster recovery and resilience programs. It is an increase of \$1.298 billion from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual due to the transfer of QRA administrative funding arrangements taking effect from 1 January 2024 and additional grant funding required by QRA in 2024-25 to support recovery from the disaster events of 2023-24.<sup>73</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 illustrates the combined total of the appropriations for the QFD for 2024-25, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for QFD (formerly Queensland Fire and Emergency Services) in 2023-24.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	213,506	298,761	250,068
equity adjustment	18,662	18,191	13,462
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	962,623	2,260,556
<b>Vote</b>	<b>232,168</b>	<b>1,279,575</b>	<b>2,524,086</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 17.

### 5.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2024 for the Vote against spending over the previous three years.

	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$million	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$million	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$million	2024/25 Estimates Sought \$million
	361,603	172,701	1,279,575	2,524,086
<b>% Change</b>		-52.24	+640.92	+97.26

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2023, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2022, sch 1, p 6.

<sup>71</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 6.

<sup>72</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 6.

<sup>73</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 6.

### 5.1.3 Budget highlights

The 2024-25 budget highlights for QFD include:<sup>74</sup>

<b>Purchase of priority fire safety equipment such as thermal imaging cameras and rapid intervention team kits</b>	• \$5 million
<b>Remediation works at Ayr Fire and Rescue Station, associated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination, with further planning around the future of the site to be undertaken</b>	• \$4 million
<b>Replacement and new fire and rescue appliances</b>	• \$23.8 million
<b>Replacement and new rural fire appliances</b>	• \$19.5 million
<b>Delivery of the new permanent fire and rescue station at Greater Springfield</b>	• \$5 million
<b>Land acquisitions for replacement facilities at Babinda, Highfields and other future strategic areas</b>	• \$3.5 million
<b>Complete the delivery of new or upgraded rural fire brigade stations across Queensland</b>	• \$5.9 million
<b>Commence the delivery of the replacement Fire Communications Centre at Cairns</b>	• \$4.5 million
<b>High priority disaster resilience and mitigation infrastructure projects jointly funded by the Queensland and Australian Governments from Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Efficiencies</b>	• \$38.2 million

### 5.1.4 Capital program

The 2024-25 QFD capital program of \$138.4 million supports the provision of fire and rescue, and rural fire services throughout Queensland. The program will fund facilities, fire appliances and essential operational equipment.<sup>75</sup>

## 5.2 Queensland Reconstruction Authority

QRA's purpose is to coordinate action to improve the resilience of Queensland communities and facilitate locally led disaster recovery.<sup>76</sup>

QRA's objectives are:

- rebuilding, recovering and reconnecting disaster affected communities
- building capacity in recovery and resilience through expert leadership and partnerships
- getting ready, reducing risk and building resilience.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 2.

<sup>75</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 5.

<sup>76</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 13.

<sup>77</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 5.

### 5.2.1 Budget overview

In 2024-25, total budgeted expenditure is \$2.3 billion, an increase of around \$200 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual of \$2.1 million.<sup>78</sup>

In 2024-25, QRA will:

- deliver acquittal of the 2023-24 claim to the Australian Government under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
- continue to coordinate and deliver responsive recovery activities that incorporate risk reduction and resilience building as standard for communities that have been impacted by extensive natural disasters in 2023-24
- incorporate additional responsibilities in the areas of resilience, risk reduction and disaster preparedness from 1 July 2024 with an uplift in staff as part of the significant reforms
- prioritise and coordinate disaster resilience funding programs
- manage the Queensland-based projects established under the Disaster Ready Fund, Emergency Response Fund and other Commonwealth funded resilience programs
- prepare Queenslanders for disasters through targeted all-hazard communication and community education awareness campaigns and outreach activities.<sup>79</sup>

## 5.3 Queensland Corrective Services

The purpose of the QCS is to provide safe, modern, and responsive correctional services, which rehabilitate prisoners and offenders, and prevent crime, making Queensland safer.<sup>80</sup>

### 5.3.1 Budget overview

The QCS' total estimated expenses in 2024-25 is \$1.654 billion, an increase of \$164.5 million from the 2023-24 Estimated Actual. This reflects increased funding to:

departdecommence operation of the Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre

- safely manage the demands of a growing prisoner population
- undertake an asset improvement program to support the safe operation of correctional centres
- deliver domestic and family violence perpetrator programs
- meet wage escalation associated with enterprise bargaining.<sup>81</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2024 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the QCS for 2024-25, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for 2023-24.

<sup>78</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 17.

<sup>79</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QFD, p 13.

<sup>80</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QCS, p 1.

<sup>81</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QCS, p 8.

Appropriations	Budget 2023-24 \$'000	Est. Actual 2023-24 \$'000	Vote 2024-25 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	1,388,232	1,509,971	1,624,641
equity adjustment	299,387	221,948	68,694
<i>Administered Items</i>	..	..	..
<b>Vote</b>	<b>1,687,619</b>	<b>1,731,919</b>	<b>1,693,335</b>

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 2, p 17.

### 5.3.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2023 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$million	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$million	2023/24 Estimated Actual \$million	2024/25 Estimates Sought \$million
	1,211,650	1,478,489	1,731,919	1,693,335
<b>% Change</b>	+22.02	+17.14	-2.23	

Source: Appropriation Bill 2024, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2023, sch 1, p 8; Appropriation Bill 2022, sch 1, p 6.

### 5.3.3 Budget highlights

The 2024-25 budget highlights for the QCS include:<sup>82</sup>

<b>Asset improvements to support the safe operation of correctional centres</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$333.6 million over 4 years and \$22.6 million ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Constructing and operating additional prison capacity to sustainably manage a growing prisoner population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$111.9 million over 4 years and \$10.5 million ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Delivering domestic and family violence perpetrator programs that support rehabilitation and re-entry to the community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$14.8 million over 2 years</li> </ul>

### 5.3.4 Capital program

The QCS has capital purchases of \$227.9 million in 2024-25, comprising of:

- \$97.3 million of a total \$885.3 million to complete construction of Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre and acquire video conference suites and other property, plant and equipment for prison industries
- \$46 million of a total \$246.4 million for infrastructure upgrades as part of the asset improvement program

<sup>82</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QCS, p 2.

- \$22.5 million of a total \$79.8 million to construct additional prison capacity to sustainably manage a growing prisoner population
- \$22.6 million of a total \$71.8 million to progress infrastructure works and support ongoing maintenance and replacement programs
- \$19.2 million of a total \$31.8 million to install information technology infrastructure in correctional centres to enhance the provision of health care
- \$13.9 million to acquire other property, plant and equipment
- \$4.5 million of a total \$8 million to install additional bunk beds in high security correctional centres across Queensland to manage the increasing prison population.<sup>83</sup>

#### 5.4 Matters considered during the committee's examination of the portfolio of the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services

The committee considered a range of matters in relation to the estimates for the QFD, QRA and QCS. These are summarised below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QFD, QRA and QCS included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Employment data regarding firefighters, including number of FTE firefighters, auxiliary firefighters and Rural Fire Service members	QoN 1
FTE firefighter vacancies	QoN 2
Upgrades to and replacement of Rural Fire Service facilities, appliances and equipment	QoN 3, QoN 5, QoN 13, pp 81, 83, 85
Communications infrastructure upgrades	QoN 4, pp 83-84
Allocation of funds by QRA for betterment by year, project and recipient	QoN 6
Disaster Ready Fund	QoN 7, p 91
Review of assault of a teenage girl in Wacol QCS facility in 2022	QoN 8, p 105
Rehabilitation, training and life skills programs for detainees in corrective facilities, including young offenders	QoN 9
Funding increases for QFD in respect of impact of climate change	QoN 10
Restructure of QFD	QoN 11
New and updated rural fire brigade facilities	QoN 12, pp 81-82
Deployable response capability of the QFD	QoN 14

<sup>83</sup> Queensland Budget 2024-25, SDS, QCS, p 7.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QFD, QRA and QCS included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Response to communities impacted by natural disasters in 2023-24, including bushfires, flooding, storms and cyclones	QoN 15
Impact of betterment funding	QoN 16, p 92
Government's initiatives to reduce recidivism	QoN 17
Management of increase of prisoner population in QCS facilities	QoN 18
Wellbeing of frontline corrective services staff	QoN 19
Recruitment of staff for the Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre	QoN 20
Use of spit hoods in Queensland correctional facilities	Crossbench QoN 1, pp 109-110
Parole suspensions	Crossbench QoN 2
Replacement of QFD facilities at Deagon	pp 78-79
Purchase of land for replacement QFD facilities at Atherton, Beerwah, Bundaberg East, Hervey Bay, South Townsville and Wulguru	pp 79-81
Assessment of climate risk with regard to disaster resilience and mitigation infrastructure	p 82
Purchase of fire safety equipment	p 84
Site investigation at Ayr Fire and Rescue Statement	pp 84-85
QFD facilities requiring remediation works due to presence of PFAS <sup>84</sup>	p 85
Education of children regarding fire safety	pp 85-86
Investment in operational equipment for firefighters	pp 86-87
Investment in QFD on Sunshine Coast	p 87
Disaster resilience and mitigation efficiencies fund	pp 88-89
Bundaberg East flood levee	pp 89, 97
Cost of evacuations following Tropical Cyclone Jasper	pp 89-90
Funding to Far North Queensland tourism operators	pp 90, 97

<sup>84</sup> Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are often used in firefighting foams and other heat resistant materials.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the QFD, QRA and QCS included:	Question on Notice (QoN), public hearing transcript page number:
Impact of QRA funding on insurance costs	pp 90-91
Construction of levee banks	pp 91, 97
Monetary contribution of councils to betterment fund	pp 91-92, 97
QRA staffing increase	p 92
Voluntary Home Buy-Back Scheme	pp 92-94, 96-97
Quarry native title working group	p 94
Issues with access to gravel by the QRA	p 94
Requirements for local councils under section 143 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>	pp 94-95
Council participation in QRA-led Property Level Flood Information Portal	pp 95, 97
QRA disaster recovery funding for mental health professional in Tara	p 95
Criteria for local government access to efficiencies funding	p 95
Increase to funding for disaster recovery reconstruction	pp 95-96
Resignation of former Parole Board President and referral of misuse of travel allowance allegations to the CCC	pp 98-105, 106, 112
Reviews of high-risk offender management area at Wacol precinct	p 105
Prisoners charged with drug-related offences	p 106
Current number of prisoners across Queensland corrective services facilities and utilisation rate (both built cell and built bed) compared to target	pp 106, 107, 112
Number of corrective services staff and Parole Board staff currently stood down	pp 106, 107, 108
Cost of prisoner transport	pp 108, 112
Body scanners at Queensland correctional facilities	p 108
Transfer of youth people from youth detention to adult correctional facilities	pp 108-109
Recognition of frontline corrective services staff	pp 110-111
Victims register and victims voice in Parole Board decisions	pp 111-112

**6 Statement of Reservation**



# Statement of Reservation – Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

## **Introduction**

Opposition members of the Committee agree with the passing of the 2024/25 Budget but acknowledge its clear limitations.

It is a matter of regret that the Estimates process has, once again, been characterised by obfuscation, concealment rather than transparency and the triumph of the opaque over the crystal clear.

At the conclusion of nearly a decade in office, and at the end of the first four year parliamentary term, the government has failed to provide reassurance that its policies are meeting the significant challenges that face the state – the cost of living crisis, the health crisis, the crime crisis and the housing crisis.

The band aid solutions outlined in the Budget fail to address the underlying causes behind these challenges. Simply directing scarce government funds at problems – many of which are the direct result of government action or inaction – will not provide the long term solutions that are required.

The Budget provided a chance for the government to chart a new direction, to discard the errors of the past and reassure Queenslanders that problems will be met head on. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that this is occurring.

Unless the government faces the economic challenges that confront the state there is little prospect other underlying problems will be overcome. The Estimates process has revealed just how unprepared the government is to meet its responsibilities to help Queenslanders.

## **Justice and Attorney-General; Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence**

The word ‘frustrated’ was used many times during the Estimates Hearing, with the Government’s lack of action (apart from protecting their own Labor-mates) being felt across the portfolio.

The Chair of the Crime and Corruption Commission expressed this frustration on the inaction of the Government remedying its reporting powers since the High Court decision almost a year ago.

Mr Barbour stated,

*“I think it is frustrating beyond just the CCC. I think it is frustrating to parliament. I think it is frustrating to the Queensland community. I think it is not in the public interest. I think there could have been a far speedier resolution to the matter than what there has been. Certainly our concerns about the process and our concerns about recommendations that have been made in the review by the former chief justice, Justice Holmes, have been made clearly to the Attorney.”*

In relation to whether the Holmes’ review model would be welcomed by the CCC, the Chair stated,

*“We have major concerns about those. We do not believe they are appropriate. We believe they are inconsistent with the public interest, and we do not support them.”*

When asked about whether the Private Member’s Bill before the House would remedy the current situation the Chair provided,

*“As I indicated to the committee considering that bill, there are certainly areas that could be improved in relation to the bill. However, from our perspective it does the job. It allows us to publicly report. It retrospectively endorses and clarifies the situation in relation to previous reports that have been prepared. That was what we understood would be an appropriate response to the decision in Carne. When that decision came down and I urged for a quick and immediate response, it was with such a bill in mind.”*

The lack of reporting powers was also revealed to likely impact the ability to report on the investigation into the one of the most significant failures in the administration of Queensland’s justice system in the state-run forensic lab.

Finally, the CCC expressed frustration at delays in the recommended police integrity unit. Despite the recommendation coming almost two years ago when the Commission of Inquiry reported, almost half a million dollars spent in investigations and four models being put to the Government, the Chair revealed it was only on the day before Estimates that a working group would be formed.

The QFCC’s Commissioner confirmed a third to half of young people in the youth justice system are known to Child Safety, despite the Government claiming the correlation is far less. Young people leaving detention are exiting into the same circumstances than when they went in, with little rehabilitation or support given. The Commissioner also confirmed the need for extended supervision over and above the 72 hours currently being offered, with a 12 month program recommended. These failures add to the youth crime crisis and contribute to our growing number of victims.

The Attorney confirmed the Government has appointed 52 Acting Magistrates, with significant questions regarding the appointment processes of these positions unable to be answered.

The Government has no clear position for how long it will take for the matters impacted by the Queensland forensic lab failures to be resolved. 40,701 cases have been identified as needing to be reviewed, and 55% of cases already submitted for re-testing coming back with profiles that had not previously been found. It was apparent the Government has no idea how long it will take or how expensive it will be to draw a line under this shameful episode.

It was revealed the Government has also dragged its feet in delivering frontline domestic, family and sexual violence workers while taking Federal money to do so. Despite being given over \$10 million, the Government failed to appoint critically needed workers, and has less than half of the positions now appointed it should have by this point.

Further, despite being warned in the Queensland Audit Office report in November 2022, the Government still doesn’t track the availability and effectiveness of perpetrator programs.

Once again we have a Government who fails to deliver the reforms needed to uphold integrity or keep Queenslanders safe.

## **Police**

During the estimates hearing on 23 July 2024, the Premier would not provide the cost of the two jets taken in tandem during April to ferry the Premier, Police Minister, Commissioner and other members of parliament, to essentially shoot a commercial. Courtesy of Commissioner Gollschewski, the true cost of the flights was revealed during the Police hearing, with Queensland taxpayers forking out \$167,640 for the two jets. The fact that these costs could not be revealed by the Premier is extraordinary given the information clearly existed. When cost-of-living crisis pressures are hurting Queenslanders, this was yet another example of the government treating the people of Queensland with contempt.

Of serious concern were the revelations that sensitive information of victims has been provided to offenders through addresses being imported from QPrime into police documents such as cautions and QP9's. The Commissioner advised the committee that he was only made aware of it the day before the hearing. Furthermore, when asked, Minister Ryan could not bring himself to apologise to the victims, merely saying that he would. The opposition will be watching the outcome of this investigation closely.

The Commissioner advised the committee that the Premier did contact him by phone in relation to the CFMEU as he "was keen to know what we were doing". The Commissioner further advised that he would not provide advice to the Premier regarding investigations of individuals. Furthermore, the Commissioner advised he would not disclose details of any information provided by Victoria Police.

In 2020 the Labor Government promised 1450 additional sworn police officers over and above attrition. The government has consistently told Queensland that they would meet that target. The Police Commissioner's evidence to the committee, however, has shown that promise is in tatters with just 303 extra police added and future predictions well short. The document tabled by the Minister (Doing What Matters: Police and Community Safety) was misleading at best regarding the forecast of police numbers and is an obvious attempt to fool Queenslanders.

## **Community Safety (Marine Rescue Queensland, State Emergency Service, Inspector-General of Emergency Management)**

Despite it being over three years since the Minister announced the name of the new marine rescue service, the implementation is behind schedule and the new entity is besieged with the chaos and crisis we have come to expect from this government. It is only the hard work and dedication of volunteers across the state that has prevented a threat to the safety of Queenslanders.

The Estimates hearing confirmed that instead of the promised four units transitioning to the new entity on 1 July 2024, only two transitioned. The description of negotiations with the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association as "delicate" indicates this may not be the last commitment that is broken throughout the process.

Confirmation that seven of the recommendations of the K'Gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review Report 1 have not been implemented more than three years after the report was completed will be of great concern to residents of the island. Similarly, the state's Bushfire Plan having not been reviewed in four years will be of concern to Queenslanders who face the dangers of an upcoming bushfire season.

Another reduction in the number of State Emergency Service volunteers was revealed during the hearing, as was the fact that only 786 of those 5,000 volunteers have completed initial training just three months prior to the start of the official cyclone season.

### **QLD Fire Department**

The provision of adequate, safe facilities for both paid and volunteer firefighters was one of the serious concerns that the LNP Members in attendance at the hearing raised on behalf of those firefighters and the communities they serve.

The replacement of the recently completed \$6.8 million Bracken Ridge Fire Station highlights the government's lack of future planning. Given that planning for the upgrade of the Gateway Motorway was underway prior to the start of construction of the station, that lack of planning highlights this Government's fiscal irresponsibility when it comes to expenditure. Commissioner Smith's confirmation that the department has no current intention of replacing the Ayr Fire Station is extremely concerning given the fact this facility is affected by PFAS contamination.

Acquisition of land for future and replacement facilities is another area of concern for the LNP with confirmation that despite funding announcements, land has not been secured for several projects. Examples of this include the South Townsville and Atherton facilities. Questions also abound due to the Minister advising the hearing that an announcement regarding land for a facility at Bundaberg East had been announced when it had not.

Evidence was also provided during the hearing that inspections of Rural Fire Service facilities now under the government's control may not be completed until a year after the government took responsibility for them. Due to this, the cost of upgrades needed to comply with government standards will not be known for a considerable time.

The safety of volunteers and road users, as well as legal liability, was raised in relation to 216 of the appliances used by the Rural Fire Service. Despite the LNP members raising questions on behalf of volunteers, whether those vehicles are classified as roadworthy and, subsequently, the legal implications for volunteers operating those appliances were not answered and were deemed to be 'hypothetical'.

Recognising the importance of stable communications in an emergency, the LNP members again raised concerns surrounding the Government Wireless Network and existing communications systems in both the Southeast and in regional areas. Given the reliance of emergency services on communications and the Government Wireless Network, the LNP Members questioned the allocation of the Critical Communications Modernisation Project to the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

### **Disaster Recovery**

Betterment has never been a priority for this Government, and it will never be until the government changes. Estimates confirmed once again that this government has not built one flood levee since coming to power a decade ago. This is despite insurance costs going up by 80% in Queensland since then. When asked about community unrest regarding the Government's handling of the Bundaberg Flood Levee, the Minister complained about the local Council rather than promising to consult better with the community.

The hearings also revealed that the Government is dragging their feet when it comes to the gravel shortage Councils are facing. Councils need less talking and more action when it comes to access to this vital material.

### **Corrective Services**

Despite prolonged questioning by the LNP Members, the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the former President of the Parole Board remained unclear. Furthermore, statements made by the Minister in the days following the hearing have done nothing to clarify who was aware of the allegations at what time and what action was taken.

The LNP members of the committee note that, during the hearing, the Commissioner refused to provide direct answers citing conflict with obligations to the CCC. As previously stated by the Clerk of the Parliament, no such conflict exists, and it is disappointing that neither the Chair nor the Minister acted on the Clerk's advice.

A statement from the Minister, tabled in Parliament on 29 July 2024, provided no real clarity as to what the Minister did or did not know and raised further questions.

An increase in the number of drug-related contraband items within correctional centres and a cell capacity utilisation of 143.6% are, without doubt, contributors to an increase in assaults on staff. Given the prevalence of drug-related contraband, it is even more concerning that a trial of body scanners at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre was delayed by more than 12 months.

Testimony to the hearing regarding the costs associated with transporting prisoners by air and taxi demonstrated that in addition to the direct costs of crime, all taxpayers are burdened with the flow on costs of criminal behaviour in Queensland.

Whilst the Commissioner advised that the risk of unauthorised persons accessing the sexual offender housing area at the Wacol precinct has reduced, concerns held by the LNP members, and the public have not been fully addressed, despite both an internal review and a review conducted by another government agency.

We also note that, despite the Commissioner indicating the information may be available before the conclusion of the hearing, an answer was not provided to a question relating to cell utilisation rates.

The LNP committee members and LNP members in attendance offer their thanks to the staff and volunteers who respond in our time of need and help keep Queenslanders safe. Whilst those staff and volunteers perform to the best of their ability, the hearing confirmed that this government's failings are adding to the burden shouldered by brave Queenslanders.

### **Conclusion**

These hearings have revealed many shortcomings in the government's policies and little evidence that the government knows how to overcome these.

Effective service delivery comes a distant second in competing with political objectives and Queenslanders continue to be let down. There was little evidence provided over the course of Estimates that the government has a clear, coherent plan to overcome the significant problems facing the state.

Of equal concern was the government's failure to deliver public projects on budget and on time.

No evidence emerged during these hearings that the government has any capacity to overcome the continuing state of chaos and crisis that has characterised so much of the past decade.

This Budget is a wasted opportunity and Queenslanders have been ignored by the government.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon Krause". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jon Krause MP  
Member for Scenic Rim  
Deputy Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Boothman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Boothman MP  
Member for Theodore