

Inspector of Detention Services: Annual operational report 2024–25

Erratum to appendices

Title of report

Inspector of Detention Services: Annual operational report 2024–25

Reasons for Erratum

The erratum is necessary to replace Appendix C and Appendix D for the Inspector of Detention Services: Annual operational report 2024–25, tabled in Parliament on 20 October 2025. Although the content of the appendices is fundamentally correct, there are technical typographical errors during conversion to PDF.

Minor typographical errors in Appendix C include replacing ‘g’ for ‘Q’ and removing ‘C’ for acronyms in some instances. The typographical errors in Appendix D include replacing ‘Q’ to ‘O’ in some instances and removal of the word ‘Service’ in one instance. This impacts Appendix C - pp. 29, 33, 34 and Appendix D - pp. 43, 45-53 only.

Action

Replace the entire Appendix C and Appendix D.

Attachment 2 – Evaluation tool

<u>Cleveland Youth Detention Centre inspection report: Focus on separation due to staff shortage</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
1	The Queensland Government and the Department of Youth Justice give priority to the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre when developing strategies to meet the government's April 2024 commitment to increase staff at youth detention centres.	Youth Justice	Fully implemented	DYJVS has made significant progress in addressing workforce challenges within youth detention centres (YDCs), achieving a net growth in frontline FTE staff. [REDACTED] Despite nationwide workforce shortages, particularly in regional areas like Townsville, DYJVS has implemented targeted attraction, recruitment, and retention strategies, including wage increases, enhanced allowances, tailored recruitment campaigns, and professional development initiatives. The attached Youth Justice Strategic Workforce Plan 2025-28 has been completed to ensure sustainability, diversity, and capability, aligning with sector recommendations and addressing systemic challenges. A central recruitment team facilitates six targeted recruitment campaigns annually for CYDC (12 across the state). These campaigns incorporate strategic attraction strategies, including partnerships with industry-relevant training organisations such as TAFE and private providers, and active participation in regional career expos. An identified position within the central recruitment team has contributed to a substantial increase in First Nations applicants for Detention Youth Worker roles. This has been achieved through strengthened relationships with key community stakeholders and First Nations organisations, targeted information sessions, and enhancements to the applicant assessment process to improve cultural safety. The recruitment process now places strong emphasis on cultural capability, support, and sensitivity throughout the end-to-end experience.

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Youth Justice – Inspector of Detention Services recommendations status 2024-25

Cleveland Youth Detention Centre inspection report: Focus on separation due to staff shortage				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
				Maximise opportunities for rehabilitative outcomes for youth through infrastructure which supports a targeted, evidence-based and culturally responsive approach to operations This strategy is undergoing consultation and includes tailored approaches for specific cohorts, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and those with diverse needs. Infrastructure upgrades are informed by condition assessments, demand analyses, contemporary design principles, and stakeholder input. DYJVS has completed feasibility assessments for retrofitting hygiene facilities into existing separation rooms at Brisbane (BYDC), West Moreton (WMYDC), and CYDC. While the importance of these upgrades is acknowledged, structural and financial constraints mean that modifications are not viable at this time. An indicative cost estimate by the independent Quantity Surveyor determined the following: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and significant capital investment. Staff and union consultation would also be required to address workplace health and safety concerns. Please see attached documentation for more information. While modifications to existing infrastructure were considered cost prohibitive at this stage, YJVS accepts the Inspector's recommendation. Consideration will be given to the incorporation of hygiene facilities in the design of new YDCs and during any future decommissioning or recommissioning activities. Any work in this area will be managed through standard infrastructure planning and delivery processes as part of business-as-usual operations.

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#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
6	The Department of Youth Justice ensures that all separation rooms and holding cells in new youth detention centres (including those at Cairns and Woodford) have basic facilities in them, including a toilet, a basin with running water, and a bed or seat.	Youth Justice	Fully implemented	For Woodford Youth Detention Centre (WYDC), DYJVS undertook a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of incorporating hygiene facilities into time-out rooms. As with existing YDCs, these rooms are designed to be used only for short durations when accommodation rooms are unavailable or unsuitable, and are equipped with intercoms and subject to constant supervision. An independent Quantity Surveyor estimated that redesigning and constructing time-out rooms to include toilets, basins, and beds [REDACTED] This cost is not covered by existing project reserves or contingencies, which were allocated based on the risk profile and construction status. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] While modifications to the final plans for WYDC were considered cost-prohibitive, future YDC designs will continue to be informed by:

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Appendix D: Agency self-assessment of actions in response to recommendations – Queensland Police Service



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Our Ref:

Your Ref:

4 August 2025

Mr Anthony Reilly
Queensland Ombudsman
Level 18, 53 Albert Street
Brisbane Q 4000

Dear Mr Reilly

I refer to your letter of 26 June 2025, regarding the Inspector of Detention Services inspections of Cairns and Murgon Watchhouses.

Thank you for the opportunity for the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to be involved in this process. The self-assessment on outcomes of the recommendations against Cairns and Murgon Watchhouses has been compiled in the attached report.

The QPS has initiated a structured program of work to implement the recommendations arising from recent inquiries, reviews and inquests. These recommendations underpin the findings of the recent QPS Watch-House Review Report. This program will also address issues identified within your recent inspection of Cairns and Murgon watch-houses.

The QPS remains committed to pursuing continuous improvement across all aspects of custodial management and look forward to continuing the work with the Inspector of Detention Services.

Yours sincerely

SHANE CHELEPY APM
ACTING COMMISSIONER

Q U E E N S L A N D P O L I C E S E R V I C E

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Queensland Police Service – Inspector of Detention Services recommendations status 2024-25

Attachment 2 – Evaluation tool

<u>Cairns and Murgon watch-houses inspection report: Focus on detention of children</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
1	The Queensland Police Service: a) examines ways to increase privacy in relation to the use of toilets for children sharing a cell b) ensures the design of new watch-houses provides more privacy for children when using the toilet c) examines ways to increase privacy in relation to the use of showers by children at the Cairns watch-house.	Qld Police Service	The QPS is working with DYJVS in reviewing the QPS building design manual to explore option to increase privacy, whilst ensuring safety and security of those people in custody. Partially implemented.	Work is progressing at Cairns Watch-house to improve privacy in the showers. The opening of the Wacol Youth Remand Centre (WYRC) has reduced the number of children and the duration they are held in QPS watch-houses.
2	The broader review of watch-houses announced by the Queensland Police Service in July 2024, and the review of the Queensland Police Service building design manual, both include an assessment of issues arising from watch-house infrastructure that create risk of harm to children, and develop strategies to address them.	Qld Police Service	The QPS are currently implementing the recommendations from several inquiries, inquests and reviews. The QPS acknowledge that children should not be kept in a watch-house for any longer than necessary and transferred to a youth detention as soon as possible. The risks identified with managing children in watch-houses and associated mitigation treatments have been incorporated into the QPS Corporate Risk Assessment #52 and within local Risk Assessments. Fully implemented	The opening of the Wacol Youth Remand Centre (WYRC) has reduced the number of children and the duration they are held in QPS watch-houses.

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Queensland Police Service – Inspector of Detention Services recommendations status 2024-25

<u>Cairns and Murgon watch-houses inspection report: Focus on detention of children</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
3	The Queensland Police Service develops and delivers mandatory training for staff who undertake admissions and assessments of children, covering such topics as trauma-informed approaches to communicating with children with complex needs and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	Qld Police Service	The QPS have been collaborating with educators from DYJVS, as well as advocacy groups in developing a contemporary high quality and practical training package for staff working in watch-houses. The package will be delivered in collaboration with DYJVS. Partially implemented.	Development of a multi-modal delivered training package, dedicated to increasing the awareness and enhancing skills of watch-house staff when managing children in a watch-house, including cultural diversity, human rights and appropriate behaviour management techniques.
4	The Queensland Police Service consults with Queensland Health and/or other appropriate health experts, to develop and implement a standardised process to be applied to all children who are detained in watchhouses: - that facilitates the examination of the child by a qualified health practitioner within a timeframe recommended by Queensland Health and/or the other health experts - that takes into account the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	Qld Police Service	QPS and QH have delivered a virtual clinical care (tele-health) model, which is accessible for all watch-houses across the state, and available 24 hours a day. QPS and QH are evaluating options for an increased presence of healthcare within watch-houses, prioritised towards the assessment of people as they are admitted into the watch-house. These options will require additional funding and increased staff for local hospitals. Partially implemented.	The development of virtual clinical care is critical for watch-houses in regional and remote areas, ensuring a consistent and dependable healthcare model is delivered across the state. The virtual health care model will support clinical services already engaged and available at larger watch-houses. The state-wide tele-health model also provides e-scripts that can be filled locally by QPS staff.

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Queensland Police Service – Inspector of Detention Services recommendations status 2024-25

<u>Cairns and Murgon watch-houses inspection report: Focus on detention of children</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
5	The Queensland Police Service, in consultation with the Department of Youth Justice, seeks expert advice (including from relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders) and develops appropriate assessment tools to use in the watch-house to identify the needs and level of risk of children (including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children).	Qld Police Service	The QPS is working with DYJVS, other Government departments and child advocacy groups to develop an appropriate assessment instrument that ensure the needs of each child are identified and appropriate risk mitigation strategies implemented. Partially implemented.	Consultation has occurred with other Australian Police services and youth justice agencies to assess their assessment and intake processes. QH (Mental Health) have also assisted in increasing the level of support to children in watch-houses through the court service mental health teams. QPS and DYJVS are reviewing information sharing protocols to ensure that information available to DYJVS regarding a child is provided to the watch-house when they are advised that a child has been arrested and taken into custody.
6	The Queensland Police Service ensures admission discussions with children are culturally appropriate and conducted in a confidential and non-threatening environment.	Qld Police Service	The QPS is working with DYJVS, other Government departments and child advocacy groups to better understand the way these discussions should occur. Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	This is a critical piece of work that will have significant dependency with REC 5.

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<u>Cairns and Murgon watch-houses inspection report: Focus on detention of children</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
7	The Queensland Police Service reviews the mandatory minimum observations for children to determine if they are appropriate for reducing risk of harm to children.	Qld Police Service	The QPS acknowledge that children should not be kept in a watch-house for any longer than necessary and transferred to a youth detention as soon as possible. The QPS is working with DYJVS, other Government departments to better understand the needs of children being held in watch-houses and the risks that must be managed. Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	In determining the frequency and level of observation required, the QPS currently use observations, conversations with the child as well as information available to QPS during the child's detention at the watch-house. This work is continuing and will be delivered with REC 5 and 6.
8	a) When children are identified as being at risk of self-harm or suicide, the Queensland Police Service: - o refers the child to mental health and/or medical staff immediately - o ensures the child is monitored and provided support by mental health and/or medical staff while in the watch-house - o notifies the Department of Youth Justice about the risk identified, to assist the chief executive in determining when the child will be admitted to a youth detention centre b) The Queensland Police Service conduct a review of Chapter 16 of the Operational Procedures Manual relating to managing the risk of suicide and self-harm for all detainees.	Qld Police Service	The QPS continue to work with DYJVS and QH in having young people referred to medical and/or mental health practitioners at the earliest time. The QPS are reviewing the Operational Procedures Manual to ensure greater clarity in role and responsibility and to reduce ambiguity. Partially implemented.	The QPS acknowledge that children should not be kept in a watch-house for any longer than necessary and transferred to a youth detention as soon as possible There is an interdependency with REC 4 and work is currently underway to seek a resolution.

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<u>Cairns and Murgon watch-houses inspection report: Focus on detention of children</u>				
#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
9	For children who are detained in isolation (by virtue of being the only child in the watch-house or because they need to be removed from other children), the Queensland Police Service ensures: - the child is referred to mental health and/or medical staff, and cultural support services - mental health and/or medical staff and cultural support services are assisted to provide ongoing monitoring and support while the child is detained in the watch-house - notification is made to the Department of Youth Justice about the isolation of the child, to assist the chief executive in determining when the child will be admitted to a youth detention centre.	Qld Police Service	The QPS acknowledge that children should not be kept in a watch-house for any longer than necessary and transferred to a youth detention as soon as possible. Whilst the QPS have no ability to influence the prioritised placement of a child at a youth detention centre. Watch-houses advocate with regional DYJVS representatives for the rapid placement of children at a youth detention centre. Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	Whilst the directions within the QPS Operational Procedures Manual are clear as they relate to the provision of medical and mental health services and/or support. It is acknowledged that there could be clearer direction relating to the requirement for children to be seen by a healthcare practitioner as soon as possible.
10	The Queensland Police Service, in consultation with the Department of Youth Justice, seeks expert advice to inform the development of: a) a behaviour management policy/strategy that provides guidance to watch-house staff in relation to behaviour management strategies, including identifying which entitlements are mandatory and cannot be withheld b) training (which is mandatory for all watch-house staff) in the trauma-informed and culturally appropriate management of children in custody.	Qld Police Service	The QPS have been working with the policy team and educators from DYJVS, as well as advocacy groups in developing both a behaviour policy and contemporary high quality and practical training package for staff working in watch-houses. The package will be delivered in collaboration with DYJVS. Partially implemented.	DYJVS have provided QPS a copy of their behavioural policy and are working with QPS on refining the policy to ensure it can be implemented in a watch-house.
11	The Queensland Police Service develop nutritional guidelines for the provision of food to children.	Qld Police Service	The QPS have been working with DYJVS on the development of nutritional standards for watch-houses.	Managing the delivery of a consistent food service in watch-houses located in regional or remote areas will continue to be challenging.

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#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
			The QPS will be amending deliverables within existing and new contracts for the provision of food within watch-houses. Partially implemented.	QPS will continue to relocate children from remote watch-houses to other watch-houses closer to youth detention centres.
12	Where children are detained in watchhouses for longer periods of time, the Queensland Police Service ensures contact between a child in a watch-house and their family is given a high priority.	Qld Police Service	The QPS Operational Procedures Manual clearly defines the obligations and responsibility to ensure children are provided regular access to parents and/or other support on a regular basis. Fully implemented.	The QPS are supporting the delivery of this recommendation through compliance management and training.
13	The Department of Youth Justice and the Queensland Police Service work together to develop structured visiting times for Youth Justice officers at the Murgon watch-house and improved communication and coordination around their visits.	Qld Police Service / Youth Justice	The QPS will work with DYJVS and advocacy support groups to ensure appropriate times are allocated to support the cultural, social and wellbeing of children held in Cairns and Murgon watch-houses. Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	Please note – DYJVS have not responded to requests for feedback on the self-assessment.
14	The Queensland Police Service works with the Department of Youth Justice to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services for the Cairns and Murgon watch-houses and ensure: - the regular involvement of community organisations is facilitated - children have access to culturally appropriate mental health care and welfare visits - protocols and agreements are in place to support this.	Qld Police Service	The QPS continue to work with DYJVS and other departments and advocacy support groups to support the cultural, social and wellbeing of children held in Cairns and Murgon watch-houses. The Community (Watch-house) Visitor scheme is being reviewed in	The identification of local support services in Murgon are hindering the delivery of this recommendation. The QPS will continue to work with NGO's to support children placed in Murgon watch-houses and are

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			collaboration with an established custody consultative committee, which works with NGO's and other support groups to ensure an appropriate level of social and cultural support is provided in watch-houses.	committed to transitioning them to the Wacol Youth Remand Centre as soon as possible.
15	The Queensland Police Service ensures Murgon watch-house staff promptly send advice of the arrest of a child to the Department of Youth Justice.	Qld Police Service	Partially implemented The Police Powers and Responsibilities Act (s.392) and the QPS Operational Procedures Manual (OPM 5.9.6 and 16.17.2) clearly defines the obligations and responsibility of QPS to advise parents and/or guardian of the arrest of a child. The QPS are managing the ongoing delivery of this recommendation through compliance management and training.	The notification of the arrest of a child is the responsibility of the arresting officer, not the Watch-house staff. However, there is an opportunity for the watch-houses to ensure that this process has occurred.
16	The Queensland Police Service and the Department of Youth Justice conduct a joint review of services to children in watch-houses across the state. This should identify gaps and develop strategies to address them, including facilitating access by appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Police Liaison Officers, to children in watch-houses.	Qld Police Service / Youth Justice	Fully implemented. A review of support services available to children in watch-houses is being undertaken as part of the Making Queensland Safer initiatives recently announced by the Queensland Government. Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	The QPS are seeking greater engagement of police liaison officers at watch-houses, to raise issues around cultural awareness and provide support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody.

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#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
				Please note – DYJVS have not responded to requests for feedback on the self-assessment.
17	The Queensland Police Service, in its review of watch-houses, consider whether there should be increased central oversight and coordination of watch-houses to improve the levels of support, and the quality and consistency of services provided to children in watch-houses.	Qld Police Service	The QPS Watch-house Review recommended policy oversight, training, professional development and auditing of watch-houses be centralised. Fully implemented.	State Custody Unit will undertake this once an appropriate funding and staffing model has been identified and sourced.
18	The Queensland Police Service reviews its complaints-handling policies and procedures to ensure it has an effective, transparent and confidential process in place for children held in a watch-house. The complaints system should be user-friendly for children with low levels of literacy, those with disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language or dialect	Qld Police Service	The QPS Ethical Standards Command are reviewing complaints process and continue to collaborate with the Public Guardian. Fully implemented.	
19	Children should only be detained in a watch house as a last resort and for the minimum time possible. Children should be admitted to a more suitable facility as soon as possible.	Qld Police Service	The QPS acknowledge that children should not be kept in a watch-house for any longer than necessary and transferred to a youth detention as soon as possible. Whilst the QPS have no ability to influence the prioritised placement of a child at a youth detention centre. Watch-houses advocate with regional DYJVS representatives for the rapid placement of children at a youth detention centre.	It is appropriate to note that the opening of the Wacol Youth Remand Centre has reduced the amount of time children spend in watch-houses. This will continue to be monitored and reviewed.

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#	Recommendation	Lead	Self-assessment	Commentary
			Not implemented - Recommendation accepted	

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