



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

In reply please quote: 545291/1

09 JUL 2012

Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie

Neil,

I refer to petition number 1904-12 regarding juvenile crime in Cherbourg which was received by the House on 6 June 2012.

As you will be aware, I have now assumed responsibility for youth justice in Queensland. The Newman Government is committed to holding young offenders accountable, rehabilitating repeat offenders and keeping communities like Cherbourg safe.

As part of the Newman Government's *Safer Streets Crime Action Plan*, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General will lead a trial of youth boot camps for young people who break the law. This program will divert 80 young people, who would otherwise receive custodial sentences, away from detention into an intensive three month boot camp program. I am pleased to advise that I recently held a Ministerial Roundtable on Youth Boot Camps to seek input from a range of key stakeholders to discuss how this program could best be delivered.

The Newman Government is also delivering our election commitment to increase the penalty for crimes including graffiti. When a young person has been found guilty of a graffiti-related offence, they will undertake graffiti clean-up to repair the harm caused and understand the impact of damaging another person's property.

Under the *Youth Justice Act 1992* (the Act), courts have the option to place a curfew condition on a young person's probation order, intensive supervision order or a conditional release order which requires them to remain at a stated place during stated periods.

Courts can also order young people to pay restitution to victims if it is determined they have the capacity to pay. Young people who are found guilty of a crime can be referred by police or the courts to a youth justice conference. The aim of the conference is to hold a young offender accountable for and understand the impact of their actions. All parties (including the victim) make an agreement about what the young person will do to repair the harm caused by the offence.

In some cases, young people pay restitution as part of their conference agreement. Across Queensland in 2010-11, young people agreed to pay a total of \$26,094 in restitution as part of their conference agreement.

In Queensland, the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009* (VOCAA) outlines the financial assistance provisions available for victims of a crime which directly results in injury to another person. The four victim categories include the primary victim and a related victim, regardless of the age of the offender.

Eligible victims of crime may, under VOCAA, receive financial assistance to help pay for goods and services necessary for recovery. Goods and services may include counselling or other psychological treatment, medical or other allied health treatments (such as chiropractic or speech therapy), recovery of earnings associated with the act of violence or a one-off payment.

To access the scheme, a victim must report the crime to police and complete a Victim Assist Queensland application form, attaching to it a Victim Assist Queensland medical certificate which has been completed by a General Practitioner or other registered health practitioner. The Act can be located at the following website: www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/VictCrimAsA09.pdf

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JARROD BLEIJIE', is written over a curved line.

JARROD BLEIJIE MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice