

2021–22 Budget Estimates

Volume of Additional Information

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

August 2021

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5.	Tim Nicholls MP, Member for Clayfield
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10.	Brent Mickelberg MP, Member for Buderim
11.	Steve Minnikin MP, Member for Chatsworth
12.	Jon Krause MP, Member for Scenic Rim
13.	Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar
14.	Amy MacMahon MP, Member for South Brisbane
15.	Stephen Andrew MP, Member for Mirani
16.	Robbie Katter MP, Member for Traeger

**Pre-hearing questions on notice and responses –
*Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for
Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and
Family Violence***



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PREHEARING QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE
MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND MINISTER FOR THE PREVENTION OF
DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE**

Question No. 01:

Can the Minister advise how funding is allocated to Noosa refuges and organisations to shelter and support victims of domestic violence and their children and whether the children are allocated separate funding packages or included with their parent?

Answer:

In 2021-22 the Department of Justice and Attorney-General will provide total funding of \$3.846 million to the Sunshine Coast, including Noosa, to deliver support to women and their children impacted by domestic and family violence (DFV). Of this, \$1.36 million was allocated across three services for the delivery of DFV accommodation services to ensure women can access safe accommodation. Services delivering accommodation and support on the Sunshine Coast, including Noosa, are provided by:

- Kyabra Community Association;
- Sunny Kids Inc; and
- The Salvation Army.

Over the next four years, an additional \$30 million will be provided to support frontline services and ensure victims and survivors are getting the support they need to be safe, secure and well. In 2021-22, the three services providing DFV accommodation services on the Sunshine Coast will share an additional \$131,812.

This is in addition to \$71,766 in funding received by these services from the Queensland Government in 2020-21 to respond to COVID-19 related need and demand. The Queensland Government also distributed a further \$32,545 to these services through the National Partnership on COVID 19 and domestic and family violence.

Brokerage funding is allocated to accommodation services to use flexibly in supporting women and their children to remain safe from violence. The use of these funds will vary and is linked to supporting the women to achieve the objectives of a case or support plan. This can include assistance to:

- access accommodation and/or maintain accommodation (including temporary accommodation);



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- pay for accommodation related expenses, including rent arrears, bond and utilities; and
- purchase specialist support services and/or other expenses to support the achievement of the case or support plan.

It may not be safe for women escaping domestic and family violence to stay in a shelter near where they usually live. For this reason, shelters do not have set catchment areas (e.g. a shelter in Noosa would not exclusively accommodate people from the Sunshine Coast and people who ordinarily live in Noosa may seek accommodation services outside this area for safety reasons).

The *Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021–25* provides \$1.908 billion over four years to boost housing supply and increase housing and homelessness support across Queensland. The Queensland Government has also established a \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, a long-term fund that will drive new supply to support current and future housing need.

Under the new Action Plan 2021-25, the Queensland Government will commence 6,365 new social and affordable homes before 30 June 2025.



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Question No. 02:

Can the Attorney-General advise whether additional funding has been allocated for the Electoral Commission of Queensland to commence a review into electoral boundaries and other electoral issues including the practice of political candidates using non-identifying electoral branding and colours?

Answer:

No additional funding was allocated in the 2021-22 Queensland Budget for the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) to commence reviews into electoral boundaries nor was additional funding allocated for reviewing other electoral matters, such as the practice of political candidates using non-identifying branding and colours.

I can confirm that the Local Government Change Commission, the independent body responsible for assessing proposed local government changes which is administered by the ECQ, has a number of ongoing assessments of local government change proposals referred by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and the then Minister for Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. These assessments are currently being undertaken within the ECQ's existing resource allocation.

In the year prior to the next local government quadrennial elections, the Local Government Change Commission must undertake divisional boundary reviews as referred by the Minister responsible for Local Government to ensure divisions contain a reasonable proportion of electors.

Resourcing requirements associated with the forthcoming local government and State boundary reviews will be considered as part of future budgetary processes.



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Question No. 03:

In relation to the Service Delivery Statement, Department of Justice and Attorney General, Queensland Family and Child Commission at page 38 (i) what salaries were paid in 2020-21 to individual Key Management Personnel and (ii) what resignations, retirements and appointments occurred during that period in relation to these roles.

Answer:

- (i) The unaudited salaries paid to Queensland Family and Child Commission individual Key Management Personnel in 2020-21 are outlined in the table below.

Position	Salary
Chief Executive and Principal Commissioner	\$288,015.11
Commissioner	\$180,898.93
Deputy Commissioner (to 30 March 2021 – position subsequently abolished)	\$192,084.93
Executive Director, Child Death Prevention	\$157,730.64
Executive Director, Oversight	\$158,163.54
Executive Director, Corporate and Communications (acting from 20 December 2020)	\$81,925.32

The following Queensland Family and Child Commission staff were not considered Key Management Personnel in 2020-21 due to secondment and staff interchange agreements:

Executive Director, Evaluation and Workforce Futures (seconded to the [then] Department of Youth Justice from 1 July 2020 to 14 May 2021)
Executive Director, Corporate and Communications (on a staff interchange agreement with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries from 17 August 2020 to 09 December 2020 – then resigned)



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- (ii) Ms Natalie Conner resigned from the Commission on 09 December 2020 following an interchange arrangement with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Ms Leanne Geppert resigned from the Commission on 30 March 2021.

Mr Tony King was temporarily appointed to the role of Executive Director, Corporate and Communications on 20 December 2020.



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Question No. 04:

In relation to the Service Delivery Statement, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, The Public Trustee at page 66 (i) how many complaints have been lodged by staff in relation to work practices or conditions in 2020-21 (ii) how many staff have taken sick leave in 2019-20 and 2020-21 and (ii) how many days of sick leave have been taken in total in each year?

Answer:

Employees of the Public Trustee are actively encouraged to raise concerns with their supervisors and to report these concerns through the employee complaints management process if they are unable to be resolved at the local level. Complaints are considered both individually and from a system perspective with a view to understanding what systemic changes may need to be made to continuously improve work practices and conditions. There were 28 employee complaints related to work practices or conditions in 2020-21 which were lodged with the Public Trustee. This represents only a small percentage of the over 600 employees of the Public Trustee.

The number of Public Trustee staff who accessed sick leave in 2020-21 is 579 compared to 513 in 2019-20, while the total number of sick leave days taken in 2020-21 was 7,558.51 days, compared to 6,057.14 in 2019-20. Due to COVID-19 and government directives, the Public Trustee has reinforced to staff that they must not attend work if unwell (even in the event of minor illnesses).



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Question No. 05:

In relation to the Service Delivery Statement, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, The Public Trustee at page 66 and since the announcement on 10 March 2021 of the establishment of a Public Trustee Board (i) has any further progress been made beyond that outlined in the response to Question on Notice No 283 (ii) what is the anticipated total cost of the Board and (iii) what payments are intended to be made to individual Board members.

Answer:

Protecting Queenslanders, especially those experiencing vulnerability, is a priority of the Queensland Government.

The Government will introduce legislation by the end of the year to establish a Public Trustee Advisory and Monitoring Board.

The new Board is part of the Government's response to the Public Advocate's report, *Preserving the financial futures of vulnerable Queenslanders: A review of the Public Trustee's fees, charges and practices*. The Board will monitor and advise on the operations of the Public Trustee, to provide ongoing improvements to the Public Trustee's performance, transparency and public accountability and to enhance public confidence in the Public Trustee's services.

Whilst the details of the legislation are still being worked through, it is currently anticipated the Board will consist of a combination of public servants and other community members, to be appointed by the Minister. Members will have a range of relevant expertise, for example in relation to business, investment, property, government, disability, advocacy, integrity, legal and human rights, and will be appointed for a period of up to three years and subject to terms and conditions determined by the Minister.

It is also anticipated the Board would have the following functions:

- to monitor and review the activities and operations of the Public Trustee from time to time, or at the request of the Minister at any time;
- to monitor and review complaints about the Public Trustee and the Public Trustee's complaints management processes;



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- to make recommendations to the Minister about improvements in legislation, policies, practices, operation, services, training and resources of the Public Trustee to ensure the Public Trustee can more effectively perform its functions, fulfill its obligations and exercise its powers;
- to advise the Minister about improvements or enhancements to the Public Trustee's operations to promote the interests of the Public Trustee's clients, particularly people with impaired decision-making capacity for a matter;
- to advise the Minister about matters the Minister refers to it;
- to make recommendations to the Public Trustee on any matter relevant to the Board's functions; and
- to provide advice, advisory services and other assistance to the Public Trustee concerning matters connected with the Public Trustee's operations.

The Board would be given power to be able to require the Public Trustee to provide information the Board requires to perform its functions.

Importantly, the Board would not be able to direct the Public Trustee. This will maintain the Public Trustee's independence as an independent statutory office.



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Question No. 06:

In relation to the Public Trustee which senior executives have left the office in the past (i) six and (ii) twelve months and what has been the cost of termination payments in relation to these positions.

Answer:

All except one senior executive during 2020-21 have served or are continuing to serve their term of employment. There have been no termination payments made to senior executives in 2020-21.



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Question No. 07:

In relation to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (i) what is the expected total cost of the Taskforce (ii) what is the cost to date (iii) what is the cost to date of payments made to individual Taskforce members and (iv) what is the cost to date of secretariat support, communications services, information technology services, office accommodation, travel and other services.

Answer:

(i) The total expected budget for the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce across the two financial years (2020-21 and 2021-22) is \$2.689 million.

(ii) As at 30 June 2021, the costs of the Taskforce and Secretariat incurred are \$0.515 million.

(iii) As at 30 June 2021, the cost incurred for the engagement of the Taskforce Chair, Honourable Margaret McMurdo AC, is \$151,000 (GST Exclusive). Other members have volunteered their time and expertise and have not been remunerated.

(iv) As at 30 June 2021, the cost of secretariat support, communications services, information technology services, office accommodation, travel and other services is \$0.364 million.



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Question No. 08:

With reference to page 1 of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General SDS which relates to preventing and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence –

Will the Minister advise, in relation to the Housing and Domestic and Family Violence Roundtable (a) the total number of roundtables planned (b) a deadline for recommendations to be made and (c) a list of stakeholders who (i) were offered to engage in the roundtable and (ii) participated in the roundtable.

Answer:

The inaugural Housing and Domestic and Family Violence Roundtable was held on 8 June 2021.

This is a collaboration between the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy, housing and domestic and family violence stakeholder groups. The roundtable also has the involvement of representatives from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; and the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs.

Stakeholders are from the social services sector, including specialist providers from the community housing sector and the domestic and family violence support services sector. These included organisations supporting Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability; the elderly; people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and LGBTIQ+, young people and people from rural and remote areas. We are also engaging with stakeholders from the real estate sector including the Real Estate Institute of Queensland.

The purpose of the Roundtable is to bring together these experienced stakeholders to develop solutions to the long-term housing needs of those who experience domestic and family violence. The goal is to identify opportunities to strengthen service delivery including the transitions between services, to keep women safe, and to support long-term, stable and affordable housing options for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.



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This is an ongoing forum with the next meeting of the Roundtable planned for August acknowledging that input is required from organisations across the State to guide further reform. The Queensland Government understands these issues are complex and critical to the community. The Government will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders in the community sector and greatly appreciates their willingness to bring their considerable expertise to the table.

The next roundtable is scheduled for 26 August 2021.



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Question No. 09:

With reference to page 1 of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General SDS which relates to preventing and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence –

Can the Minister detail (a) the number of crisis accommodation services that were operating in each financial year from 2019/20 to 2021/2022 to date (reported separated by year and region), and (b) the number of places provided to survivors of domestic violence per annum (reported separately per year and region) (c) the number of places available per annum (reported separately per year and region).

Answer:

Providing temporary accommodation and support is one of the many ways that front line services support women, and women with dependent children to escape violence and safely re-establish their lives. Women's shelters are part of a suite of services, including mobile support to work with women wherever is safe and best for them, flexible brokerage to address housing barriers, as well as housing programs such as supportive head leasing or keeping women in their homes where it is safe to do so.

Under this Government, we have built seven new domestic and family violence shelters in Queensland, the first new Government funded shelters in 20 years. The Government has also provided funding to upgrade and increase the capacity of existing refuges.

In 2019-20 and each year since, 53 shelters have been funded to provide emergency temporary supported accommodation to women, and women and children experiencing domestic and family violence across the State. The regional breakdown is:

- Northern Queensland (from Townsville to Thursday Island, including the Torres Strait and as far west to Mount Isa and Mornington Island) - 21 shelters;
- Central Queensland (from Gympie to Mackay and Whitsunday) - nine shelters;
- South West (including Ipswich, Toowoomba and Far West, as well as South Burnett) - six shelters;
- South East (from Logan and Redland, south to the Gold Coast) - five shelters; and
- Moreton region (includes Greater Brisbane and north to Sunshine Coast)- 12 shelters.



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The number of places provided to survivors of domestic violence is not reported annually but on any given day that a report is drawn down. Occupancy rates are typically at 95%. The small number of vacancies are due to maintenance and changeover/cleaning of rooms or units.

The number of accommodation places available per annum has increased by 1,734 since 2019/20. The capacity of accommodation places varies from 1 and 2 bedroom units to larger detached houses, to meet the diversity of need (e.g. single women and women with large families).

The regional breakdown of accommodation places available per annum is:

Period/ Region	Northern Queensland	Central Queensland	South West	South East	Moreton	Queensland Total
2019/20	36,865	18,615	11,680	13,900	33,610	114,670
2020/21	36,865	19,284 *	11,680	14,965	34,675 **	117,469
2021/22	36,865	19,284	11,680	14,965	34,675	117,469

*An additional 669 places per annum were achieved within existing funding.

**An additional 1,065 places per annum was the result of fully opening the new shelter facility in 2020/21

It may not be safe for women escaping domestic and family violence to stay in a shelter near where they usually live. For this reason, shelters do not have set catchment areas.

\$160.9 million is being invested in 2021–22 to provide housing, support and specialist homelessness services to vulnerable people, including older women and those experiencing domestic and family violence. Over the next four years, the Government is providing \$20 million to expand domestic and family violence housing support services, and \$20 million for homelessness initiatives including through head leases and crisis housing and supports.



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Question No. 10:

With reference to page 1 of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General SDS which relates to preventing and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence –

Will the Attorney-General advise, in relation to convictions for offences relating to the domestic violence contained in s 12A of the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992*, (a) the total number of offences recorded as a domestic violence offence in accordance with subsections (2), (3) and (8) (broken down by region and court).

Answer:

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to stopping all forms of domestic and family violence.

The framework outlined in section 12A of the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* formed part of a suite of reforms implemented by the Palaszczuk Government to further protect victims of domestic and family violence and to hold perpetrators to account. Those reforms, which responded to various recommendations in the 2015 *Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an end to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland* report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence included:

1. increasing maximum penalties for breaches of domestic violence orders under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* from three to five years;
2. enabling charges for criminal offences to indicate that they occurred in a domestic violence context and providing that convictions for domestic violence offences be noted on a person's criminal history); and
3. amending the *Evidence Act 1977* to ensure the availability of protections for special witnesses apply to all victims of domestic violence.

I am advised that since the commencement of these provisions on 1 December 2015, that as at 14 July 2021, the total number of offences recorded as a domestic violence offence in accordance with subsection (2) of 12A of the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992*, by region and Court was:



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Region	Court				
	Magistrates (Childrens) Court	Magistrates Court	Childrens Court of Qld	District Court	Supreme Court
Brisbane	-	755	-	3,287	178
Southern Qld	-	4,063	3	2,917	-
Sunshine Coast & Western Qld	-	2,403	-	1,401	8
Central Qld	7	2,362	-	1,706	27
North Qld	11	6,873	4	2,936	58
TOTAL	18	16,456	7	12,247	271

The total number of offences recorded as a domestic violence offence in accordance with subsection (3) was:

Region	Court				
	Magistrates (Childrens) Court	Magistrates Court	Childrens Court of Qld	District Court	Supreme Court
Brisbane	22	232	12	133	-
Southern Qld	47	2,209	39	108	-
Sunshine Coast & Western Qld	52	694	8	37	-
Central Qld	39	667	11	62	-
North Qld	197	1,210	67	46	1
TOTAL	357	5,012	137	386	1

I am unable to advise the number of previous offences recorded as a domestic violence offence in accordance with subsection (8), as when an order is made under this section, the number of charges to which those orders relate is not recorded in the Courts case management system.



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Question No. 11:

With reference to page 9 of the SDS, can the Attorney-General advise how the Palaszczuk Government is keeping Queenslanders safe from alcohol-fuelled violence?

Answer:

Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Policy

The Government is committed to reducing alcohol-fuelled violence through its *Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence* Policy.

Since 2015, the Government has introduced measures including reducing late-night liquor service hours and implementing ID scanning in safe night precincts.

Evaluation

In 2019, the Queensland Alcohol-related violence and Night Time Economy Monitoring (QUANTEM) project undertook an independent evaluation of the policy which found promising reductions in alcohol related violence.

It also found the policy delivered an overall financial benefit of \$16 million to Queensland in reduced costs associated with the lessening of serious assaults, hospital admissions, emergency department presentations, ambulance callouts and traffic crashes. Between 2016 and 2018, benefits ranged between \$2 and \$5 for every dollar spent on policy implementation costs such as extra policing of night time venues.

The mandatory ID scanning framework was found to be effective in reducing antisocial behaviour and assisted with solving at least one serious crime per week.

On 21 May 2021, QUANTEM researchers updated their final report based on 3-year trends from the start of policy implementation (July 2016 – June 2019).

The updated report again identified promising reductions in some indicators of alcohol-related harm in Queensland, including:

- a 49% decrease in the number of serious assaults between 3am-6am on Friday/Saturday State-wide;



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- a 52% reduction in serious assaults in Fortitude Valley between 3am and 6am on Friday/Saturday, and a 43% reduction during high alcohol hours in Toowoomba;
- the average number of monthly ambulance call-outs during high alcohol hours reduced by 26.2% in Fortitude Valley, 21.1% in Surfers Paradise; and
- importantly, there was no measurable negative impact on business due to *Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence* Policy initiatives; unlike what happened in Sydney and Newcastle.

Legislative implementation

In 2019 and 2021, the Government made legislative changes in response to QUANTEM's recommendations.

The 2021 changes, contained in the *Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021*, further enhance the policy by:

- providing greater rigour around ID scanning;
- increasing the duration of initial police banning notices from 10 days up to 1 month;
- providing greater transparency around liquor and gaming decisions; and
- requiring reviews of safe night precinct boundaries to be undertaken every 3 years.

ID scanning

Since ID scanners commenced on 1 July 2017, as at 31 March 2021, 1,763 banned persons (not unique individuals) were identified through ID scanning attempting to enter licensed premises in contravention of their banning orders.

In 2020-21, to 31 March 354 banned persons (not unique individuals) were identified.

Safe Night Precinct (SNP) Grant Program Funding

In 2021-22, the Palaszczuk Government has allocated \$500,000 in funding to the SNP grants program, with grant round 24 closing on 31 July 2021.

This funding initiative has ensured local boards could continue to seek funding for administration costs and for safety initiatives including security services and taxi marshals.

Compliance inspections

Funding has been allocated to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to continue increased inspections of licensed venues and to monitor the industry's progress on implementing and complying with the Policy.

Between 1 July 2020 and 31 March 2021, the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation completed 4,031 liquor inspections, 1,515 within safe night precincts.



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Question No. 12:

With reference to page 1 of the SDS and the Government's commitment to ensure that women can fully participate in the social, economic and broader community of Queensland, can the Attorney-General please outline some of the key achievements of the Queensland Women's Strategy 2016-21?

Answer:

The Queensland Government has a strong record of delivering for Queensland women and girls and the Government remains committed to improving gender equality and women's safety.

The Queensland Women's Strategy 2016-21 outlines our vision for a community that respects women, embraces gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls.

Much has been achieved over the life of the Strategy. Some highlights include:

- Exceeding our target of 50% representation of women on Queensland Government boards by 2020 – at June 2020, women comprised 54% of Queensland Government board members up from 31% when the target was set.
- More than 31,000 women have benefited from the Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) initiative, and more than 10,600 women into work through the Back to Work program.
- In 2018, we passed historic laws so that Queensland women can now legally access termination of pregnancy services, removing it from the criminal code.
- More than \$600 million invested since 2015 to end violence against women and girls, including funding to open seven new women's shelters, the first opened in Queensland in 20 years.
- Leading the nation, with Queensland becoming the first State to legislate 10 days' paid domestic and family violence (DFV) leave for Queensland Government employees.
- Implementing the Barrister's Equitable Briefing Policy, a whole-of-government policy with focus on gender equity for barristers undertaking legal work for Queensland Government departments.
- Legislating to allow de-registration of vehicles displaying offensive slogans.
- Since 2016, 318 Year 10 girls and 55 teachers from state schools across Queensland have become a part of the STEM Girl Power network, encouraging others to consider STEM pathways and opportunities.



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It has not been government working alone. An accompanying Community Implementation Plan contains 299 initiatives across government agencies, industry, and the community sector – highlighting the need for all parts of society to work together to achieve gender equality.

While significant gains have been made, gender inequality persists. At a time when momentum continues to build across the country it is timely that we re-examine how we can best drive change in Queensland.

Consultation is underway on a new Queensland Women's Strategy to be released later this year to provide a framework for government, the private sector and the Queensland community to continue to take significant action to achieve gender equality in all aspects of Queensland society and facilitate women's full economic inclusion.



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Question No. 13:

With reference to page 1 of the SDS and the Government's commitment to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence, can the Attorney-General please update the committee on the roll out of the High-Risk Teams?

Answer:

The Queensland Government is committed to eliminating domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) from our communities.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) is leading work across government and the community to implement integrated service responses to address DFSV and the High Risk teams are a core component of this integrated service response approach. They play an integral role in keeping victims and their children at high and imminent risk of serious injury or death, safe and holding perpetrators to account.

High Risk Teams were rolled out in a staged approach across eight locations in Queensland starting in 2017 with the establishment of three trial sites in Logan/Beenleigh, Mount Isa and Cherbourg. Since that time, a further five sites have been established in Brisbane, Ipswich, Cairns, Mackay and Caboolture.

Outcomes from these High Risk teams have been positive with increased information sharing between agencies, better system responses for victims and their children and further opportunities to hold perpetrators accountable for their violence. This has importantly resulted in enhanced safety and support for victims and their children.

Recent data from the High Risk Teams has revealed the reporting of emotional and psychological abuse has surpassed physical violence for the past two years. This tells us that our frontline services are increasingly aware that not all forms of abuse and violence against women are physical.

The High Risk teams form one component of a broader integrated service response to domestic and family violence. DJAG funds a range of specialist domestic and family violence services across Queensland to help coordinate localised integrated approaches and responses to victims of domestic and family violence. We know that when services work together, with a shared



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understanding and approach to domestic and family violence, this increases safety for victims and their children and provides opportunity to hold perpetrators accountable for their violence.

The High Risk teams are supported by Queensland's Common Risk and Safety Framework (CRASF). This framework provides practitioners with an evidence-based, best practice approach to recognising and responding to domestic and family violence. DJAG is now leading the further refinement of this framework, informed by the outcomes of the evaluation of the initial trial sites.

One of the key areas for refinement includes broadening the use of the framework, to ensure it can be utilised and implemented across a range of multiagency responses in Queensland. The framework is currently being widely consulted and the refined assessment tools are due in November 2021. DJAG works with the service sector to build and strengthen integrated responses to domestic and family violence around the State. In collaboration with a broad range of government and non-government agencies, local needs are identified and community approaches are supported to respond to and prevent domestic and family violence. This includes agencies with DFV touch points coming together in local areas to formalise and organise their actions. In Ipswich for example, government and non-government agencies developed a DFV Integrated Service Response Action Plan. This localised action plan highlights key areas for work across agencies to better respond to and prevent DFV.



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Question No. 14:

With reference to page 3 of the SDS and the roll out of perpetrator interventions, can the Attorney-General please detail the work to enhance perpetrator intervention services and how it will keep victims safe?

Answer:

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) has undertaken several initiatives to support the response to domestic and family violence (DFV), including the rollout of further critical frontline DFV support services and perpetrator interventions.

DJAG provides recurrent funding to 17 organisations to deliver 26 perpetrator programs across Queensland, for a total of \$8.506 million per annum. Since July 2016, DJAG has increased funding for perpetrator programs and men's services by 144%.

These services are funded to provide individual counselling and group behaviour change programs to perpetrators of DFV. Programs must operate within a practice framework that prioritises victim safety and incorporates appropriate information sharing and victim advocacy as strategies to achieve this goal.

DJAG has engaged the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast to trial the online delivery of perpetrator programs to meet the need for accessible and quality perpetrator programs tailored to the different levels of readiness of individual perpetrators. Griffith University was engaged to formally evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of online program delivery. The trial is currently underway with the final evaluation report expected later this year.

From 2021-22, an additional \$4.388 million over four years will be invested to expand court support, information and referral services for aggrieved and respondent parties involved in civil DFV court proceedings, as well as perpetrator programs, at court locations with a high volume of civil DFV lodgements.

The Practice principles, standards and guidance for funded domestic, family and sexual violence (DFS) services (practice standards) came into effect on 1 January 2021. The practice standards bring together all DFS types under one consolidated set of standards. The revised practice standards have been developed to ensure clients receive the same quality of service regardless of where they live in the State.



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The revised practice standards emphasise, that the safety of the victim is paramount, and perpetrators must be held to account for their actions. Services delivering perpetrator programs must also comply with Perpetrator Intervention Services Requirements including group readiness, duration of group programs, maximum number of group participants, gender of co-facilitators, qualification and experience requirements of facilitators, victim advocates, and observers.

The recently released domestic and family violence services regulatory framework will come into effect from 1 January 2022. The regulatory framework monitors compliance with the practice standards and aims to promote practice consistency and continuous improvement across the sector to improve victim safety, perpetrator accountability and service integration across Queensland.

The Queensland Government recently announced its response to the DFV Death Review and Advisory Board 2019-20 Annual Report. The Board's report has a particular focus on perpetrator response – namely the need for more work to identify, monitor and address the behaviour of perpetrators of domestic and family violence, including the development of an overarching system-wide strategy for responding to all perpetrators, regardless of their level of risk.

Specially the Queensland Government has accepted the recommendation to develop a strategic, long-term framework to guide the Queensland Government's work in strengthening responses to all perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Perpetrator interventions will also be a key priority of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and their Children.



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Question No. 15:

With reference to page 5 and 6 of the SDS and Blue Card Services, can the Attorney-General advise what steps the Palaszczuk Government has taken to increase the efficiency of Queensland's Blue Card System and what future steps the Government intends on undertaking to further enhance blue card services?

Answer:

The Palaszczuk Government takes the safety of Queensland's children extremely seriously. Blue cards are one part of several measures in place across government to protect children. The Queensland Family and Child Commission found in their 2017 report, *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of the blue card system*, that Queensland's blue card system was one of the strongest in Australia.

The Palaszczuk Government has continued to strengthen and streamline the blue card system by implementing a number of key reforms including:

- No Card, No Start laws in August 2020, enabling jobseekers to apply for a blue card without having an upfront link to an organisation which allows people to come to organisations job-ready with a blue card;
- modernising the previous paper-based blue card application system allowing people to apply for and renew their blue cards online, reducing processing timeframes for most people who apply online and do not have any assessable information;
- delivering an online portal for organisations which allows organisations to efficiently manage their obligations online, replacing the previous paper form processes, and obtain important real-time status changes for their linked employees and volunteers;
- allocating identified resources to directly assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants;
- implementing an enhanced decision-making tool in line with current research and best practice principles to assist with assessing risk; and
- an improved identity check process for people applying for blue cards and photographs of cardholders on new cards issued.

Although the thorough and robust assessment of blue card applications cannot be compromised, a number of further strategies have been implemented to improve timeliness of application processing, including:



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- a dedicated team to triage applications;
- a dedicated team to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants;
- a review of communication materials to make assessment requirements easier for applicants to understand and respond to;
- a review of the decision-making tool in line with current research and best practice principles to assist with assessing risk;
- a tender process has commenced for a professional service to review the Eligibility Assessment team including, roles, delegations, workforce structure and process improvements; and
- a new position is being established to monitor and audit assessments to improve workflows.

The significant impact of these reforms has been immediately evident in the sharp increases in the efficiency of blue card application processing. I am pleased to advise that from 31 August 2020 to 31 March 2021:

- 81% of all applications were submitted online and over 5,339 organisations have been set up with access to the organisation portal; and
- the total average timeliness for all applications (including online and paper) with no police or disciplinary information is three business days, well within the five business day benchmark recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

As at 31 March 2021, 91% of blue card holders indicated their overall satisfaction with the blue card application process and service, significantly exceeding the SDS target of 85%.

The Palaszczuk Government remains committed to continuous improvement of the blue card system and is progressing work on further key reforms including:

- automated information sharing with other working with children check jurisdictions through Queensland's participation in the National Reference System;
- reviewing assessment procedures to further streamline processes for people whose blue card applications require more complex assessment; and
- implementing an electronic case management system for compliance activities.

In addition to the strategies currently being implemented Blue Card Services are also investigating options to streamline processes to obtain and assess criminal and disciplinary histories in a more timely manner.



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Question No. 16:

With reference to page 9 of the SDS, can the Attorney-General outline how the Gambling Community Benefit Fund adapted during the COVID-19 Pandemic to assist communities?

Answer:

I am pleased to be responsible for approving the distribution of grants from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF). The fund was established under the *Gaming Machine Act 1991* with the objective of allocating grants to not-for-profit community groups throughout Queensland. These grants assist communities in their capacity to provide services, leisure activities and opportunities for Queenslanders.

In 2020-21, over \$74 million was approved across 3,102 applicants this included round 104 which was carried over from the 2019-20 financial year due to COVID related delays. In this current financial year there will be five funding rounds, with over \$60 million forecast to be allocated to approved eligible applicants.

Since 2020, we have all adapted to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GCBF included. Travel restrictions required the Gambling Community Benefit Committee to find alternatives to continue the valuable work of the fund. This resulted in moving the committee voting and recommendation process online from June 2020 – ensuring both south-east Queensland and regional Queensland members were able to participate. Continuing benefits of this online process include shortened preparation and meeting times.

Additionally, due to the impact of the pandemic being felt by us all, the fund responded by adding COVID-19 as a priority 1 category for applications, making the pandemic impact equal to that of a natural disaster. In the most recent approved application round, more than 93% of applications submitted in the priority 1 category were identified as requiring assistance due to the impact of COVID-19.

During this last year, a number of organisations which had received funding prior to the pandemic have reached out advising that due to COVID-19 they were not able to proceed with their project or were experiencing project delays. The fund has approved variations and extensions of time for these organisations to ensure they are able to continue to provide vital services to their communities.



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For example, the Gladstone Australian Football Club Incorporated, was awarded \$35,000 to purchase an equipment trailer to travel away for games. The organisation was unable to progress with this initiative due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The fund therefore approved a variation of the grant and the organisation instead installed a portable office and merchandise shed, upgraded player shelters and purchased a bar fridge and freezer for the canteen.

The Returned & Services League of Australia Queensland Branch Coorparoo & Districts Subbranch Incorporated, was awarded \$35,000 to upgrade facilities and equipment in its two function rooms for the benefit of multiple community groups that regularly use the rooms. COVID-19 significantly impacted the ability to hold any functions or take bookings for the rooms. As a result, the association was approved to vary the grant to upgrade the air-conditioning system, purchase two computers and update kitchen equipment.

To further demonstrate how the fund adapts to community needs, consultation with the not-for-profit community identified the desire to access grants with a larger funding limit allowing for more significant projects and the ability to purchase higher cost equipment. In response to this, the GCBF will implement four funding rounds per calendar year in 2022 and increase the funding limit to \$100,000 for the first funding round for each calendar year starting in February 2022.

The GCBF has continued to have a significant positive impact on supporting community organisations across Queensland during the COVID-19 pandemic. I encourage your constituents to refer to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's website at: www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/community-grants for further information on the current funding round which is now open.



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Question No. 17:

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Attorney-General outline how the Government is making it easier for victims of crime to access support services such as mental health and court support?

Answer:

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to caring for Queenslanders and recognises the importance of assistance for victims and families harmed by violence. The Government has provided an extra \$1 million each year and 10 Full Time Equivalent positions to Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) to support victims of violent crime in Queensland. This is in addition to a funding boost in 2019 of \$2 million over two years to assist with an increase in applications.

From 1 July 2017, legislative amendments made it easier to apply for assistance and improved access to the scheme for victims of domestic and family violence resulting in a significant increase in applications:

Applications for financial assistance received

	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Number of matters	2,587	4,243	4,190	4,177	4,603
Yearly movement		64% increase	1.2% decrease	0.3% decrease	10.2% increase

Since it was established on 1 December 2009, VAQ has paid more than \$139 million to 20,061 different applicants who have been victims of violence committed in Queensland.

Through the financial assistance scheme, victims can access appropriate support and services to help in their recovery including medical and counselling expenses and assistance with funeral expenses for people who have died as a result of an act of violence. It also protects vulnerable victims against further victimisation through assisting with expenses such as security upgrades or relocation.



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Mental health support

Since 1 July 2018, the financial assistance scheme has enabled access to mental health support by providing over \$2,125,410 in payments to victims of crime to access professional counselling. Eligible victims can choose their professional counsellor, in their local area and in relation to their specific needs.

VAQ also administers the Victims Services Funding Program, over \$3.14 million per financial year including \$1.35 million annually to the Victims Counselling and Support Service, Relationships Australia Qld. This service delivers state-wide support to victims of crime through a 24-hour telephone information and referral service, and free professional counselling through metropolitan and regional outlets across the State.

The mental health of the families of victims of homicide is supported through funding of the Queensland Homicide Victim Support Group, \$530,000 annually. This organisation supports people who have been affected by homicide, delivering a crisis response, specialised grief and trauma services, peer support services, court support and 24-hour telephone support.

Similarly, the Government supports the mental health of victims with an intellectual disability by funding Working Alongside People with Intellectual and Learning Difficulties (WWILD), \$270,000 annually.

A further \$220,000 is provided annually to Anglicare's Living Well program, that supports men who have experienced sexual assault state-wide through telephone and online services, and face-to-face in Brisbane.

Court Support

Court support is delivered directly to victims by VAQ officers based in Cairns, Rockhampton, and Ipswich. The officers provide face to face support in their local area and telephone support throughout the State. Their role includes building capacity in government and non-government organisations to enhance support of victims and provide direct support to victims of crime with complex and high needs, including court support, referrals to support services and assistance in completing financial assistance applications and Victim Impact Statements.

Under the Victims Services Funding Program, VAQ funds the Victim Support Unit (Court Network) \$240,000 per annum to deliver court support for adult victims. This service informs people about what to expect, provides emotional support, accompanies people into court while they give their evidence and assists with preparing documents such as Victim Impact Statements and applications for financial assistance. The service provides court support in Brisbane and Ipswich with outreach to the Sunshine Coast.

Similarly, Protect All Children Today is funded \$530,000 annually to provide state-wide specialist court support for child victims and child witnesses in the criminal justice system.



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Question No. 18:

With reference to page 67 of the SDS, can the Attorney-General advise what steps are being undertaken to increase transparency, accountability and to enhance public confidence in the services delivered by the Public Trustee?

Answer:

The Public Trustee is committed to becoming a more modern, socially and financially responsible service that values human rights and puts customers first.

In 2020 the Public Advocate's *Preserving the financial futures of vulnerable Queenslanders: A review of Public Trustee fees, charges and practices* report was released. It outlined a total of 23 recommendations specifically in relation to the Public Trustee, and a further recommendation made in conjunction with the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government received an additional 10 recommendations related primarily to legislative reform.

As a consequence of the report, the Public Trustee has already implemented a number of the recommendations including:

- the Customers First agenda – an ambitious and industry-leading program of work to ensure that Queenslanders can continue to have confidence in the Public Trustee;
- a Social Responsibility Charter has been developed as the organisation's commitment to its social responsibilities for customers and the community;
- a new customer-focused and service delivery oriented functional structure was established and includes the creation of four dedicated regional directors – within the Public Trustee's existing FTE – to ensure greater support for all regions for the benefits of their customers, staff and the community. The new structure also includes the separation of customer and corporate legal services to ensure clear delineation of advice between customers and the Public Trustee in legal matters;
- in collaboration with key academics from Latrobe University, developed and delivered a structured decision-making framework to guide frontline workers when engaging with customers and their support networks. This will also ensure that decisions consider the human rights of customers and are consistent with the Public Trustee's obligations under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000*;



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- established two reference groups to engage with Queensland Government agencies and organisations representing the interests of customers to ensure best practice in decision-making and reforms for the benefit of customers and Queenslanders. The Public Advocate is a member of the Government reference group;
- recently launched a Financial Independence Pathways program to support customers to better understand financial management and progress to financial independence if that is appropriate;
- developed a suite of Easy English resources to enhance access to information that clearly explains the Public Trustee’s services and products. This also includes information to help new financial management customers understand what to expect from the Public Trustee as their financial administrator; and
- enhanced the information presented in financial managements customers’ annual budget statements to help customers and their support networks more easily understand their annual budget, including income and budgeted expenditure.

The Public Trustee has also initiated a comprehensive review of its fees and charges to ensure they are transparent, fair, reasonable and reflective of the services provided. The review will include public consultation and will be overseen by a Steering Advisory Board.

While the review is underway, the Public Trustee has taken further steps to improve the transparency of its fees and charges, including publishing information about fees and charges in an easy-to-read format supported by case studies and has developed a fees and charges ‘Ready Reckoner’, as a tool to understand the different types of fees applied for Public Trustee services.

In addition, the Public Trustee has strengthened the governance of its fees and charges with the introduction of the Fees and Charges Integrity and Governance Framework and an annual independent audit of fees and charges.

The Palaszczuk Government is also committed to establishing a Public Trustee Board with an advisory and monitoring focus which will improve its performance, transparency and public accountability.

With the support of the Queensland Government, the Public Trustee is committed to delivering services that are valued by its customers and the community and is continuing to review its practices as part of its transformation journey.



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Question No. 19:

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, will the Attorney-General provide an update on the implementation of a new recording and transcription model for Queensland Courts?

Answer:

In 2013, the former LNP Government closed down the State Reporting Bureau (SRB) located within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, sacking all staff. Overall, the LNP cut 507 FTEs and \$170.184 million across the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

Since March 2013, the majority of court recording and transcription services have been provided by a single external provider, Auscript Australasia Pty Limited (Auscript).

The former LNP Government promised that savings would be achieved by outsourcing recording and transcription in the sum of about \$6 million annually. These levels of savings never eventuated.

In 2015, the Auditor-General conducted a review of the process that led to the outsourcing.

The Auditor-General found that:

- there was no consideration given to courts and court users;
- the process was rushed;
- procurement processes were bypassed;
- the market was not tested;
- user needs and service requirements were not understood;
- there was inadequate information to supply the market;
- court users and courts were dissatisfied with costs, quality and timeliness of transcripts being delivered by Auscript, which ultimately impacted on access to justice; and
- the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has minimal oversight and viability under the contract of key high-risk aspects of the service, vulnerability of sensitive and confidential material.



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The Palaszczuk Government accepted the recommendations of the Auditor-General. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General conducted a review which identified a new service delivery model to ensure the quality and timeliness of court transcripts in Queensland, while also providing the best overall value for money. The new model will bring recording, and management of the service back in-house to the Department, with transcription being outsourced to multiple providers.

The new service delivery model was developed through qualitative and quantitative analysis, and evaluation that included:

- detailed assessment of court and court user requirements;
- in-depth market sounding and capability analysis;
- jurisdictional review; and
- comprehensive analysis of risks and benefits.

The formation of the panel of transcription service providers for the new service delivery model is nearing completion, with two new providers entering contracts with the Department. The providers are VIQ Solutions Pty Ltd and Epiq Australia Pty Ltd.

The project has experienced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including hardware supply-chain delays and working with interstate vendors impacted by lockdowns.

The Department continues to work closely with the software vendor to resolve challenges in the delivery of an off-the-shelf technical solution.

The Department has also engaged in several activities with the new providers, to ensure they can deliver services that meet the needs of courts and court users. Activities included requiring the providers to monitor and annotate 100 hours of court proceedings, and complete 1,000 pages of court transcripts. The Department assessed the performance of the providers, against quality and timeliness measures and both providers performed to an acceptable standard.

I am advised that the new service delivery model will deliver operational efficiencies, increase security and drive cost competitiveness and quality outcomes for the benefit of all court users.

It is anticipated that the benefits of the new model will include:

- court users being able to choose a transcription service provider;
- court users being able to share the cost of a transcript;
- the Department retaining ownership of transcripts and audio recordings;
- the introduction of key performance indicators (KPIs) for quality and timeliness; and
- the application of financial penalties for providers failing to meet KPIs.

A staged transition to the new model is scheduled to commence by the end of 2021.



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Question No. 20:

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Attorney-General outline the processes used to allocate funding to community legal centres in Queensland?

Answer:

Every procurement process undertaken to allocate Queensland and Commonwealth Government funding for legal assistance services delivered by Community Legal Centres (CLCs) is robust and transparent. In consultation with the legal assistance sector, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has developed a funding allocation process aligned with funding strategies developed from the *National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020-25* (the NLAP) and Queensland's investment model. This process promotes service delivery that is: targeted to identified areas of legal need (based on evidence); maximised within available resources; efficient; effective; and complementary (non-duplicating).

The funding strategies have a strong focus on improving collaboration and coordination between legal and non-legal services (i.e. partnerships and referral pathways) to better identify legal problems and support holistic service delivery.

Service delivery funding

There were two procurement processes to allocate legal assistance service delivery funding to CLCs over 2020-25. These processes involved:

- Queensland and Commonwealth legal assistance service delivery funding being allocated through an open tender process with mandatory evaluation criteria;
- applicants demonstrating how they deliver legal assistance services in accordance with the *National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance* (the national best practice principles for legal assistance service delivery);
- applicants drawing on the latest evidence and analysis of legal need to support their applications; and
- evaluation of applications by an independent Evaluation Team who assessed the quality and value for money of services and made recommendations to both the former Attorney-General and me.



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2020-25 processes

The outcomes of the 2020-25 procurement process were announced on 18 May 2020 with 24 CLCs being allocated \$112.152 million for the delivery of services. Community Legal Centres Queensland, the peak body for CLCs in Queensland, was also directly allocated just over \$2.628 million to provide support to CLCs in Queensland.

While the details of the procurement process are confidential, I can advise that:

- applications were received from 40 organisations;
- the value of the applications received exceeded \$176 million, significantly more than the \$119.452 million available for allocation;
- all of the successful organisations are CLCs; and
- for the first time, funding was allocated for a period of five years, allowing CLCs to plan for services and offer significant security to staff and volunteers.

Eight of the 24 successful CLCs were allocated funding to deliver additional and much needed services or programs in response to the changing legal assistance service delivery needs of highly vulnerable communities in Queensland.

Following the completion of this tender process there were geographic service delivery gaps in five locations (Bayside-Wynnum, Goondiwindi, Hervey Bay, Moreton Bay and Mount Isa). Five generalist CLCs located in these areas were directly allocated funding for the delivery of services in 2020-21 while a further tender process was undertaken for those locations for 2021-25.

On 9 April 2021, I notified applicants of the outcomes of this second process.

Other funding

In addition to funding for service delivery, the Queensland Government also sets aside State Government funding for CLCs to respond to emergencies or emerging community legal needs; and to deliver projects.

Organisations can apply for this funding by way of request to the Director-General, Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

Project funding is allocated by the Department to support coordinated and collaborative approaches which have a positive impact on the sector. Initiatives are identified by the sector and consultation undertaken before funding is allocated.

**Pre-hearing questions on notice and responses –
*Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for
Fire and Emergency Services***

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services

ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1

QUESTION:

With reference to page 1 of the Service Delivery Statement for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and their commitment to ensure communities are capable in the face of fires, emergencies and disasters, will the Minister please outline for the Committee the proactive initiatives undertaken by QFES to educate and support Queenslanders, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic?

ANSWER:

Community safety will always be a priority for this government, particularly with respect to the range of severe weather, bushfires, emergencies and disasters, including the COVID-19 global health pandemic, that Queensland experiences.

As a frontline agency, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' (QFES) dedicated staff and volunteers have supported and continue to support Queensland communities in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am advised that since the beginning of the pandemic, QFES has played a significant role in supporting the operational response through the operation of the State Disaster Coordination Centre, providing frontline support to the Queensland Police Service with border control operations, planning, exercising and quarantine hotel management.

Continued community engagement, resilience building and education relating to disaster management are also crucial to maintaining community safety and QFES works collaboratively with agency partners at a state, regional and local level to deliver on these initiatives.

QFES provides free education programs with safety at the core:

- **Safehome:** this program is delivered by QFES operational firefighters to assist in understanding fire and safety hazards in and around the home. During the home visit, households are provided with advice on the required steps to eliminate these hazards.
- **Fight Fire Fascination:** this program is a confidential and voluntary educational program targeted at young people between three and 17 years old, who have been involved in at least one concerning fire incident. The program is designed to instil knowledge and respect about the dangers of fire and to encourage participants to develop fire safety skills.

- **Road Attitudes and Action Planning:** this program facilitates in-school road safety presentations designed to enable young drivers to make informed decisions and follow safe driving habits, ensuring their own safety and the safety of the community. There are currently 91 trained QFES RAAP presenters across the state.

QFES staff and volunteers also deliver community education programs, resources and assistance to teachers to facilitate age-targeted learning in schools through programs, such as Bushfire Ed, Fire Ed, SafeSpace and StormSafe.

Additionally, QFES designs and manages a number of awareness and information campaigns which deliver crucial and lifesaving advice to Queensland communities, including:

- **If It's Flooded, Forget It:** this floodwater safety campaign now uses the 'Back It Up' tagline to target the 31% of drivers who research shows could be tempted to enter floodwater.
- **Bushfire Preparation Campaign:** QFES delivers a Bushfire Preparation campaign each year, highlighting the risk of bushfire and urging residents to prepare themselves and their properties. The campaign directs residents to extensive online resources where they can understand the widespread risk of bushfire, create a household bushfire survival plan, and learn how to prepare their property.
- **Home Fire Safety Campaign:** this annual campaign runs during the winter months each year, highlighting the importance for every household to have a well-practised fire escape plan, so everyone can escape quickly, should a fire start. The campaign uses radio, digital, social media, and search advertising along with the tagline 'Take 5, Get Out Alive' encouraging people to spend a few minutes discussing and practising their household fire escape plan.
- **Smoke Alarm Legislation Campaign:** QFES continues to promote awareness and uptake of interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms following legislation which commenced in 2017, to make Queensland homes safer. From 1 January 2022, all residential rental properties must have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms installed when a new lease is signed, or an existing lease is renewed. With this important compliance deadline in mind, QFES is running two, three-month bursts of advertising in 2021. The advertisements target landlords, urging them to upgrade their properties to the new safer interconnected alarms. The REIQ is a strong supporter of this campaign and has delivered extensive education activities with its members across the state.

QFES continually works with communities, stakeholders and partners to assist Queenslanders to prepare for the unexpected.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 2

QUESTION:

I refer to Page 2 of the Service Delivery Statement for the Queensland Police Service and the Budget Highlights which references 'continuing and expanding initiatives under the Youth Justice Five Point Plan to target serious recidivist young offenders on bail', and ask, will the Minister please update the committee on the work being undertaken by co-responder teams?

ANSWER:

Community safety is one of this government's top priorities and we are committed to protecting our communities from high-risk repeat young offenders.

We are listening to the community and are committed to doing more of what works to proactively address youth crime and improve outcomes across the state.

Since 2017, this government has invested over \$550 million in youth justice reforms. Additionally, \$98.4 million was provided this year to continue the fight against youth crime, including initiatives to reduce reoffending, tougher action on bail, culture-based rehabilitation and 24/7 co-responder teams.

These co-responder teams are making a positive impact on young people's lives and diverting youth at risk of offending.

As part of the 24/7 co-responder model, police officers and youth justice workers work together to reduce reoffending by monitoring and engaging with vulnerable young people in public places on a range of issues, including homelessness, domestic and family violence and substance misuse.

The co-responder teams conduct bail checks to ensure that bail conditions for young offenders are being met.

The co-responder model is currently operating in 8 locations across the state - Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Mackay, Moreton, North Brisbane, Logan and the Gold Coast.

I am advised the teams have had approximately 13,000 engagements with young people since the start of the initiative in May 2020.

The important work of these co-responder teams is backed by this government's further investment in the initiative, with \$11.9 million allocated in the 2021-22 budget to continue this worthwhile initiative.

Initiatives, such as the 24/7 co-responder teams, work in collaboration with the significant investment this government has made to target the ten percent cohort of hardcore recidivist youth offenders.

These investments include tough new laws and a record Police budget that is delivering 2025 additional police personnel over five years.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and
Emergency Services**

**ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING
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No. 3

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Service Delivery Statement, will the Minister please update the committee on the government's capital investment in fire appliances?

ANSWER:

Every year, Queensland experiences around 60 per cent of the nation's natural disasters and our first responders are being called on more and more to protect Queenslanders when disaster strikes.

Their hours are not nine to five, their efforts put them in harm's way and for that we owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

This government is committed to investing in the resources, vehicles and frontline equipment that our firefighters and emergency service volunteers need to keep the community safe.

That's why the 2021/22 budget provides \$30.5 million to fund more new vehicles, marking a continuation of a six-year commitment from this government that has already delivered more than 620 new and replacement Fire and Rescue Service and Rural Fire Service vehicles.

This \$30.5 million investment in new and replacement appliances doubles the funding from the last financial year for Rural Fire Service vehicles, delivers more vehicles for Fire and Rescue Service professional firefighters and is a 33% increase in investment when compared to the LNP's last budget.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 4

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Service Delivery Statement, and the Government's commitment to enhance natural disaster preparedness, will the Minister please outline how QFES has prepared for the 2021 bushfire season to keep Queenslanders safe?

ANSWER:

I am advised that Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is well prepared for the 2021 Bushfire Season.

As our landscape and general weather conditions change, QFES has been required to remain agile and adjust accordingly.

As such, I am advised that QFES and its partners have now adopted a year round mitigation program, which will support and coordinate bushfire mitigation activities to be conducted across Queensland beyond the annual Operation Cool Burn period.

This is backed up by a collective \$42.7 million that has been allocated over four years by the Government for bushfire mitigation, enhancing natural disaster predictive services, strengthening the planning, response and recovery from bushfires and disasters, along with land use and planning enhancements for bushfire management.

Further, a key weapon in Queensland's bushfire-fighting arsenal will now be based in Australia year round, after this government successfully secured the Large Air Tanker (LAT) for the next four bushfire seasons.

The LAT will complement the already substantial national aerial firefighting fleet, which I am advised includes a combination of planes and helicopters that are deployed on an on-call basis, along with other LATs.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 5

QUESTION:

With reference to Page 1 of the Service Delivery Statement for Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) and their stated purpose to make Queensland safer by providing modern and responsive correctional services which rehabilitate prisoners and offenders, and prevent crime, will the Minister please advise on the approaches taken by QCS to address the risks associated with COVID-19?

ANSWER:

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact day-to-day life in Queensland, including the operation of correctional centres and community corrections facilities.

Like other frontline public safety agencies, the pandemic has brought about unique challenges for Queensland Corrective Services (QCS).

Despite these challenges, Queensland's prisons have remained free from COVID-19. Just as the Palaszczuk Labor Government's success in keeping Queensland safe from this virus has been the result of significant and early planning, the success against this virus in Queensland prisons is similarly the result of rigorous planning and preparation.

On 3 March 2020, QCS established a dedicated COVID-19 Taskforce and on 19 March 2020, QCS established a State Corrections Operations Centre to coordinate an agency wide approach to the management of COVID-19. Since that time, QCS has been working closely with Queensland Health to develop and deliver an evidence-based and coordinated response to COVID-19, always ensuring the department's operations during the pandemic reflects the clinical advice of the Chief Health Officer and Queensland Health.

Early in the COVID-19 crisis it was acknowledged that fighting this virus inside a prison would be difficult, so significant efforts have gone into preventing COVID-19 from breaching the prison walls.

Staff and prisoners within our correctional centres cannot socially distance in the same way other Queenslanders can. This means the risk of an outbreak is high, and

without the very strictest of controls, COVID-19 could rapidly spread at a faster rate than it would in the community.

Under Stage 1 restrictions, when a prisoner first enters a prison facility they are subject to a temperature check and health checks as determined by Queensland Health personnel, and only subject to isolation if advised by Queensland Health personnel.

For restrictions under stages 2 to 4, when a prisoner first enters a prison, they are subject to isolation for a cumulative period of 14 days in single cell accommodation insofar as practicable, and temperature checks and health checks as determined by Queensland Health personnel. Further, prisoner movements between correctional centres are restricted, and any prisoner deemed to be vulnerable is managed to reduce their level of contact with the broader prisoner population.

QCS officers and other essential staff are required to undergo medical screening, including temperature checks, before entering a correctional facility.

Despite the current restrictions, QCS continues to provide daily activities related to prison industries and rehabilitation programs wherever possible.

QCS also fast-tracked initiatives to support prisoners to maintain access to their families, legal representatives and the courts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Virtual prisoner visits with family are operational through fixed screens and tablets are available for prisoners at all high security correctional centres and at the Helana Jones Centre and the Capricornia Low Security Centre.

In 2020-21 more than 37,000 virtual personal visits took place.

Court video conferencing has also been expanded, with additional court video conferencing capability deployed at Arthur Gorrie and Brisbane Correctional Centres.

To enable service continuity, COVID Safe plans have been developed and implemented for community corrections offices throughout the state. This ensures offenders continue to be monitored throughout the pandemic.

Electronic supervision by GPS devices, including the fitting of devices and monitoring of offenders has continued, as well as face-to-face reporting, subject to health screening and social distancing, where warranted based on risk.

The measures implemented by QCS have worked and they are keeping staff, prisoners, offenders and the community safe. The government's response has meant that Queensland has not had to endure the same hardships experienced by corrective services overseas.

For example, in March 2020, New South Wales rushed through emergency legislation to allow that state's Corrective Services Commissioner to release some prisoners early.

In early 2020 the Texas Department of Corrections released figures showing there were over 2,000 positive cases of COVID-19 in that state's prison system, with more than 1,400 prisoners and just under 600 staff members testing positive.

Media articles from 2020 identified Italy, one of the worst affected countries, had experienced a series of violent protests in its prisons during 2020 with 13 inmates dying and 70 escaping. These reports identified the Italian government attempted to head off the crisis by permitting certain prisoners with less than 18 months left to serve to be released on house arrest.

When we look at the national and international responses to COVID-19 it is very clear that Queensland's response has been timely, measured and responsible, and most importantly it has been effective and successful.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 6

QUESTION:

I refer to Page 2 of the Service Delivery Statement for the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and the Budget Highlights, which outlines the QPS' commitment to protecting the community from the spread of COVID-19 and ensuring the safety of all Queenslanders, and I ask, will the Minister please provide details of the police response during the global health pandemic?

ANSWER:

Since the beginning of 2020, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) has provided extensive support to the whole-of-government coordinated response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and I commend police on their significant efforts in keeping communities safe and preventing the spread of COVID-19 into Queensland.

The QPS has focused on educating the community and ensuring compliance with the Chief Health Officer's public health measures.

The State Police Operations Centre (SPOC) was activated in early February 2020, and Taskforce Sierra Linnet was established in March 2020, to support the planning and coordination of key QPS COVID-19 activities.

These activities have included:

- Domestic and international border controls;
- Developing and implementing a border pass system to facilitate entry into Queensland;
- Restricting access to Queensland's most vulnerable communities;
- Public health emergency direction compliance checks for individuals and businesses;
- Issuing quarantine directions and investigating any breaches in relation to these directions;
- Security overlay at quarantine hotels;
- Supporting the activities undertaken within the Queensland Disaster Management Framework;
- Rapid response planning and coordination to contain outbreaks of COVID-19 within Queensland;
- Support to Queensland Health contact tracing activities; and
- Support to various multi-agency reviews, including COVID-19 outbreaks.

The Chief Health Officer's domestic and international border restrictions, and the border controls and quarantine arrangements operationalised by the QPS and partner agencies, represent Queensland's first line of defence against COVID-19.

The QPS is playing an integral role in maintaining Queensland's border restrictions at the state's international, domestic and regional airports, in addition to providing security overlays at quarantine accommodation across the state.

The QPS also maintains controls at Queensland's road borders as required, in response to the changing public health environment.

At Queensland's international airports as at 9 August 2021:

- 59,872 international passengers have been processed (this excludes flight crew and exempt persons, such as seasonal workers and seafarers)
- 87,169 quarantine notices have been issued to persons entering Australia (this figure includes air crew and exempt persons, such as seasonal workers and seafarers)

In recent weeks, there have been several COVID-19 outbreaks throughout Australia resulting in lockdowns and enhanced restrictions for Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. This has required the rapid reinstatement of domestic border controls, as well as quarantine requirements for relevant persons travelling to Queensland from declared hotspots, interstate exposure venues and interstate places of concern.

At Queensland's domestic airports as at 9 August 2021:

- Police have met 20,658 domestic flights
- 1,454,035 passengers have been subject to entry confirmation checks
- The QPS has issued 45,847 quarantine directions and of these, 31,212 persons have been directed to quarantine at hotels
- 2,732 people have been refused entry for not meeting entry requirements

Periodically throughout 2020 and 2021, the QPS has conducted a series of domestic border compliance activities across approximately 65 road border control points throughout Queensland. These comprised hard border closures, combination locked gates, static interception sites, and roaming patrols. The QPS also conducted random vehicle intercepts across 45 road border control points from the period 28 May 2021 to 23 July 2021, to manage emerging COVID-19 hotspots, interstate areas and places of concern, and interstate exposure sites.

From the period 26 March 2020 to 9 August 2021 at Queensland's road borders:

- 1,307,763 vehicles were intercepted and subject to entry confirmation checks
- 19,469 quarantine directions were issued, with 1,381 of these directed to quarantine at hotels
- 25,282 people were turned away for not meeting entry requirements

With the emergence of second, third, and even fourth waves of COVID-19 being experienced internationally, it is evident the threat of COVID-19 is far from over.

As the majority of active COVID-19 cases in Australia are acquired overseas, Queensland's end-to-end quarantine management system remains a critical defence in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The system is robust, highly

organised and prioritises the safety of QPS members and other quarantine venue workers, those in quarantine and the broader community.

As part of the state's quarantine arrangements, the QPS is responsible for the provision of security overlays at quarantine hotels, in support of the quarantine requirements set out in the various Chief Health Officer directions.

At the peak of Australia's COVID-19 outbreak, the QPS was providing security overlays at 35 quarantine hotels across the state at any one time.

Managing the high numbers of people subject to quarantine requirements, while ensuring the health and safety of officers, the community and people in quarantine, has been a significant undertaking by the QPS with the assistance of several partner agencies.

As at 9 August 2021:

- The QPS is providing security overlay at 17 hotels accommodating quarantined persons; and
- Approximately 107,634 people have completed hotel quarantine in Queensland, with 3,756 quarantining at hotels currently.

Despite the high volume of persons quarantining, Queensland has experienced very few breaches of hotel quarantine, largely due to the consistently high standards applied to the management of hotel security by police.

Police have taken an educative approach to promote and ensure compliance with the Chief Health Officer's public health measures, guided by the principles of compassion, communication and compliance.

The QPS continues to conduct community compliance and investigative activities in relation to self-quarantine and home confinement requirements, limits on movement and gatherings and business restrictions in Queensland.

As at 9 August 2021:

- 22,236 self-quarantine compliance visitations have been conducted to ensure people are complying with quarantine requirements as appropriate; and
- The QPS has conducted 15,335 business compliance visitations.

These compliance checks and investigative activities have acted as the state's second line of defence against COVID-19 and are ongoing to ensure the community is complying with the public health directions to minimise virus transmission.

Queensland has recently experienced several community outbreaks of COVID-19, resulting in lockdowns for parts of the State. This included a two-phase lockdown for South East Queensland, Townsville and Palm Island from 29 June 2021 to 3 July 2021, a lockdown for South East Queensland from 31 July 2021 to 8 August 2021, and a three-day lockdown for Cairns and Yarrabah commencing 8 August 2021.

During these periods, heightened restrictions were introduced for locked down areas, including home confinement, mask wearing requirements, restrictions on movement and gatherings, and restrictions on business operations.

In supporting these enhanced restrictions, the QPS maintained its longstanding approach in operating under principles of compassion, communication and

compliance. This has involved handing out masks to the community where appropriate and providing education on the new restrictions.

Overall, community compliance with the public health directions has been very high throughout the duration of the pandemic and this has significantly contributed to the consistently low rates of COVID-19 cases and transmission rates in Queensland.

However, where blatant and reckless disregard has been shown, police have responded with necessary enforcement action to keep the community safe from the spread and impacts of COVID-19.

As at 9 August 2021:

- The QPS has issued 3,515 Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) for non-compliance with the public health directions;
- 39 of these have been issued as corporate PINs to businesses for breaches of the public health directions;
- 154 PINs have been issued in relation to mask requirements; and
- Police have issued 402 Notices to Appear/Arrests/Cautions in relation to 432 offences for non-compliance with the public health directions.

The QPS implemented an internal review process early in the pandemic to ensure the validity of each infringement notice issued for contraventions of the public health directions.

The QPS continues to deal with the competing demands of business as usual policing and ensuring surge capacity to respond to potential COVID-19 outbreaks in Queensland and providing an effective disaster management response.

I am advised by the QPS that throughout the pandemic, thousands of police officers and staff members have been deployed to COVID-19 related duties across the state. As at 9 August 2021, it is estimated that over 303,975 shifts dedicated to COVID-19 duties have been completed.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 7

QUESTION:

I refer to page 2 of the Service Delivery Statement for the Queensland Police Service, which mentions the new Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command, and I ask, will the Minister please provide details of policing initiatives in place and planned to support victims of domestic and family violence?

ANSWER:

This Government will always protect the victim and condemn the perpetrators of domestic and family violence. We will continue to deliver better services, better policies and better training for police.

I am advised all police-related recommendations from the Not Now Not Ever report have been implemented.

I am advised that the Queensland Police Service (QPS) responds to an average of 295 domestic violence occurrences across the state daily and that each case is unique.

To enhance responses to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, police launched Operation Sierra Alessa last year. It was an intensive state-wide pilot over two months that specifically targeted repeat offenders. Its aim was to disrupt the behaviour of serious domestic violence perpetrators, reach out to victims and connect them with partner support agencies.

I am advised this pilot identified nearly 320 perpetrators and led to a 56 per cent reduction in domestic and family violence related incidents. As a result, police continue to use these tactics to target an even greater number of high risk and serious perpetrators and have launched Operation Tango Alessa to continue these efforts.

In October last year, police conducted a 9-month trial to improve responses to domestic and family violence. It was a co-located service model to support women experiencing domestic and family violence. It involved a Women's Advocate embedded in police stations at Southport and Coomera near to the front counter. The aim was to provide greater support and entry into support services for the victims of domestic and family violence. The trial is now the subject of an independent

assessment by Griffith University and the QPS will use any learnings from this trial to shape future service delivery strategies.

Other proactive policing initiatives include:

- A new online Domestic Violence reporting tool for people to report non-life-threatening matters with more than 1300 online reports since it was introduced in April last year;
- Specialist police Domestic and Family Violence Coordinators across the 15 Police Districts;
- A Deputy Police Commissioner to oversee the delivery of domestic and family violence reforms;
- A dedicated Domestic and Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command established in March this year, led by Assistant Commissioner Brian Codd;
- Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Units;
- Domestic and Family Violence Coordinators in the Brisbane Police Communications Centre to provide support to frontline officers;
- Additional training to equip frontline police with skills to better respond to victims of domestic and family violence;
- High-Risk Teams to provide a timely, multi-agency response to domestic and family violence;
- Specific Vulnerable Persons training for frontline police; and
- Improved access to frontline technology with mobile QLITE devices, which enable Police Protection Notices to be issued where they are needed, when they are needed.

Ending the scourge of domestic and family violence in Queensland communities remains a priority for this Government.

This Government's commitment is demonstrated through actions contained in the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026*.

The Strategy aspires to harness the collective strengths and expertise from across all levels of government, non-government organisations, businesses, and communities, to formulate and deliver sustainable, long term and culturally appropriate domestic and family violence prevention approaches.

Queensland Police Referrals allow officers to connect at-risk and vulnerable people with external support providers. This fully automated system has over 530 service providers covering 67 different issues, which are broadly grouped into 22 referral categories, including: domestic and family violence (offering referrals for both victims and perpetrators); mental health; homelessness; and victim support.

In May 2021, the QPS endorsed an overarching plan of immediate, medium and long term actions to enhance the policing of domestic and family violence. Actions include:

- Issuing of an Operational Advisory Note reminding officers of the requirement to use Body Worn Video Camera's, processes for conducting show cause bail situations and the recording of front counter interactions when investigating domestic and family violence;
- Delivering domestic and family violence culture and compliance sessions to frontline police;

- Delivering key internal and external domestic and family violence messaging;
- Delivery of Training: Coercive Control training, Domestic and Family Violence Policing Enhancement Training and the Cultural Enhancement Training Program;
- Testing a High Risk/Harm Dashboard and other analytical tools;
- Conducting a whole of service domestic and family violence audit led by the Ethical Standards Command;
- Hosting a Domestic and Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Conference attended by a range of domestic and family violence experts and practitioners;
- Establishing a QPS Domestic and Family Violence Advisory Group of key external stakeholders to help inform QPS strategy and practice;
- Developing a stand-alone domestic and family violence manual to guide and shape policing responses;
- Developing a whole of service Quality Assurance and Performance Framework for domestic and family violence;
- Developing a capability framework for District based Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Units;
- Conducting a system wide review of the prevention, disruption, investigation and response to domestic and family violence within the QPS.

The QPS continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on domestic and family violence in Queensland to inform policing responses. The QPS introduced new ways for members of the public to contact police, for example, through an online portal and by SMS. While primarily designed for hearing impaired persons, the SMS function has been extended to all victims of domestic and family violence. Since these additional reporting options were introduced in April 2020, there have been more than 1,300 online reports and 205 registrations for the SMS reporting.

The QPS remains committed to continuing to investigate and trial new and innovative policing approaches to send a strong message to perpetrators that their behaviour will not be tolerated.

The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce chaired by the Honourable Margaret McMurdo AC is examining coercive control and women's experiences in the criminal justice system. Deputy Commissioner Linford has been appointed as the QPS representative and will be supported by a senior researcher and two senior sworn officers.

The QPS continues to invest in ongoing training, education and professional development. A training package is being developed for frontline police to enhance their response to coercive control. The QPS is also developing a stand-alone domestic and family violence manual to guide and shape frontline policing responses to domestic and family violence incidents.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 8

QUESTION:

I refer to page 2 of the Service Delivery Statement for Queensland Corrective Services, which makes reference to the new 1,000-bed corrective services centre in south east Queensland, and I ask, will the Minister please advise the committee of the employment opportunities generated during the construction stage of this new facility and ongoing job opportunities once fully operational, along with the economic benefits being delivered to the Lockyer Valley?

ANSWER:

The new facility to be built as part of Southern Queensland Correctional Centre Stage 2 is an economic game changer for the Lockyer Valley and surrounding regions.

This \$654 million project is one of the largest infrastructure projects in Queensland.

Construction is already underway and the economic benefits have already begun.

This project is part of Queensland's plan for economic recovery from the pandemic.

During construction the project will support hundreds of construction jobs, up to 900 jobs at peak times.

And local suppliers and businesses will also benefit.

I have received information from the company constructing the project, John Holland, indicating a huge number of businesses have registered for a share of the action.

As a result of this project, many local businesses are in line to potentially benefit.

And, once complete, the facility will support a minimum of 500 permanent full-time secure jobs.

It's important to note that last year the government took a very deliberate decision to expand the scope of this project.

The government announced extra funding for the project in last year's budget.

This has resulted in a better version of the original design.

The new design converts 262 cells from a bunk-bed cell design to a larger two single bed cell design.

In addition, the new design has a built-in capability to easily, and relatively cheaply, increase bed numbers if demand requires.

This is an example of this government's forward thinking and good planning.

And it's about supporting Queensland jobs.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 9

QUESTION:

I refer to page 1 of the Service Delivery Statement for Queensland Corrective Services, which highlights the government's objectives to back frontline services, and I ask, will the Minister please provide the committee with an overview of the work that has been undertaken to transfer privately-run prison facilities into public operation?

ANSWER:

Following assessment of the Crime and Corruption Commission's Taskforce Flaxton Report, the Palaszczuk Government determined that eliminating privately operated prisons would reduce corruption risk, support staff safety and contribute to better outcomes in the criminal justice system.

On 26 March 2019, we announced our decision to transition Queensland's two remaining privately run prisons, Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and Southern Queensland Correctional Centre from private to public operation.

Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) established Operation Certitude, a highly skilled and dedicated project team to deliver this complex body of work.

Transitioning these two prisons to public operation has been one of the largest and most complex tasks undertaken within the department's 170-year history.

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19, I can advise that Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre successfully transitioned to public operation on 1 July 2020 and Southern Queensland Correctional Centre successfully transitioned to public operation on 1 July 2021 – on time and on budget.

To support these transitions and to provide a safer correctional environment for officers through increased staffing ratios, I am advised QCS undertook the largest recruitment activity in its history and welcomed more than 500 transitioning officers and more than 200 new recruits and internal transfers.

I am told that there is no other example in Australia, or internationally, where two operational prisons were transitioned from private to public operation at the same time.

This reinforces the obvious significance of this outstanding work by QCS and particularly the Operation Certitude team superbly led by Deputy Commissioner James Koulouris.

I commend them for their outstanding efforts.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 10

QUESTION:

I refer to Page 9 of the Service Delivery Statement and the overview of the Office of the Inspector General Emergency Management, which refers to driving continuous improvement in emergency management, and I ask: will the Minister please provide the committee with information about the standard for disaster management in Queensland, which came into effect on 1 July 2021?

ANSWER:

The work of the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (IGEM) is world class and recognised by the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements as an exemplar of independent assurance and evaluation.

The IGEM has a legislated role under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* to make, review and assess disaster management standards in Queensland.

I am advised that the development of the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland was conducted by IGEM in partnership with disaster management stakeholders and Queensland Government agencies. The current Standard came into effect on 1 July this year.

To ensure the Standard remains contemporary, IGEM recently refined the Standard based on feedback from the disaster management sector. Recent updates include a Shared Responsibility of 'Common language' and further changes to make it simpler and more concise.

By focusing on outcomes, the Standard supports flexibility in application to best meet an entity's capability, capacity and needs.

The Standard is complemented by the Emergency Management Assurance Framework, which guides how IGEM drives continuous enhancements across the disaster management sector in Queensland. The Standard and a range of supporting resources that assist the disaster management sector to apply the Standard are publicly available on the IGEM website.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 11

QUESTION:

SDS-3 notes that only 65% of State Emergency Service volunteers meet minimal operational training requirements. Can the Minister advise whether the training budget for QFES to train SES volunteers will be reviewed and increased this Budget?

ANSWER:

It is important to note that the premise of this question is incorrect. 65% is the **target** and as SDS-3 indicates this target has been exceeded.

This Government values the role of the thousands of SES volunteers who keep communities safe throughout Queensland when disaster strikes.

I am advised that the 2021/22 State Budget allocation for the State Emergency Service (SES) increased by almost 7 per cent. This budget increase includes additional funding for training initiatives.

In contrast, the previous LNP Government cut funding to the SES Disaster Rescue Challenge and abolished the SES Cadets. In fact, I am advised the current budget for the SES is now almost 20% larger than the last LNP budget in 2014/15.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 12

QUESTION:

With reference to the closing of Noosa's police beats in preference for mobile police beat resourcing – can the Minister advise when Noosa's mobile police beat will be commencing and provide an assurance that it will be dedicated to the Noosa area in its operations?

ANSWER:

As the committee would be aware, the allocation of police resources is determined by the Police Commissioner following a detailed assessment of area growth, safety issues and any new or emerging issues. The Police Commissioner makes this decision, free of any political interference, which is as it should be. This ensures a fair and equitable service is provided throughout the state.

As the Police Commissioner has previously announced, it is her intention to transition on a case-by-case basis the policing service delivery model in some communities from out-dated fixed police beats to modern, agile, mobile police beats.

From these new mobile police beats, which are essentially state-of-the-art police beats on wheels, police can take crime reports, victims' statements and conduct field interviews. Mobile police beats can be swiftly deployed to where they are needed, when they are needed. The Police Commissioner has made it clear that, as a result of these mobile police beats, the community will see more police, more often.

This government is supporting the Police Commissioner's vision by funding the roll out of 25 mobile police beats across Queensland over five years.

The Police Commissioner has determined that at least two of these new mobile police beats will be delivered to the Sunshine Coast Police District, which includes Noosa and surrounding suburbs.

The Queensland Police Service has advised that the community of Noosa and surrounding suburbs can expect to see a mobile police beat regularly deployed to the local area from this financial year.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and
Emergency Services
ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING
QUESTION ON NOTICE**

No. 13

QUESTION:

Could the Minister advise how many staff have commenced work with the Queensland Corrective Service and how many have left the employment of Queensland Corrective Services in the 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 financial years?

ANSWER:

I am advised by Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) that during 2018-19, 852 staff joined the agency and 696 staff ceased employment. In 2019-20, 1212 staff joined QCS and 669 staff ceased employment. During 2020-21 1525 staff joined and 747 staff ceased employment with QCS.

During June this year I was delighted to attend two QCS graduation ceremonies, one in Townsville for 17 custodial trainee graduates and a second for a further 96 custodial trainee graduates in South East Queensland.

These events are a very real demonstration of this government's commitment to community safety and to keeping Queenslanders safe.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 14

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise, as at June 30 2021:

- a) Built Bed Capacity of Queensland's prisons, broken down by location
- b) How many cells, for operational reasons, are not currently being used for prisoner accommodation, reported by centre?
- c) Number of prisoners held in Queensland's prisons and the number of Custodial Corrections Officers broken down by location,
- d) Number of people in the community being managed as part of Community Corrections broken down by location?
- e) How many staff were allocated to working directly with people being managed as part of Community Corrections broken down by location?
- f) How many Psychologists, Educators and Counselling Staff are currently engaged by Queensland Corrective Services and how many vacancies currently exist, broken down by occupation and centre?
- g) Total cost of damage to QCS facilities caused by prisoners in the 2020-21 financial year?

ANSWER:

It is my opinion that this question relates to multiple unrelated issues and is therefore in contravention of Standing Order 115(a) which states that questions shall be brief and relate to one issue. Additionally, in my opinion there is scope to refuse to answer the question under Standing Order 182(6). However, in the spirit of open and accountable government and out of respect for the Estimates process I will answer the question on this occasion.

With respect to the number of built and operationally commissioned beds on 30 June 2021 by location I am advised that at Wacol there were 2,964 built beds, at Stuart there were 1,095 built beds, at Etna Creek there were 901 built beds, at Arriga there were 1,028 built beds, at Woodford there were 1,512 built beds, at Spring Creek

there were 312 built beds, at Albion there were 26 built beds, at Maryborough there were 755 built beds, at Palen Creek there were 170 built beds, at Numinbah there were 119 built beds, and at Ironbark there were 736 built beds.

On any given day it is possible that there are cells within a correctional centre that are unable to be used due to operational reasons. Examples of reasons for taking a cell offline include to conduct regular maintenance, for planned or unplanned repairs or general cleaning, declaration of the cell as a crime scene, or to undertake deep cleaning associated with COVID-19 protocols. Each correctional centre manages its assets to best respond to individual issues, which change on a day-to-day basis.

I am advised that on 30 June 2021 there were six cells at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre that were temporarily offline, one cell at Brisbane Correctional Centre was temporarily offline, five cells at Townsville Correctional Centre and one cell at Townsville Women's Correctional Centre were temporarily offline, 120 cells at Capricornia Correctional Centre were temporarily offline as they were undergoing refurbishment and renewal as part of the Capricornia Expansion Project, one cell at Wolston Correctional Centre was temporarily offline, six cells at Woodford Correctional Centre were temporarily offline, and the Helena Jones Centre, Numinbah Correctional Centre and Palen Creek Correctional Centre all had one cell temporarily offline.

With respect to the number of prisoners held in Queensland prisons on 30 June 2021 I am advised there were 9,954 prisoners in custody.

With respect to the number of Custodial Corrections Officers broken down by location as at 30 June 2021 I am advised that at Wacol there were 1,170 fulltime equivalent officers (FTEs), at Stuart there were 443 FTEs, at Etna Creek there were 340 FTEs, at Arriga there were 322 FTEs, at Woodford there were 493 FTEs, at Maryborough there were 227 FTEs, at Palen Creek there were 26 FTEs, at Numinbah there were 28 FTEs, at Albion there were 9, and at Ironbark there were 288 FTEs.

With regard to the number of people in the community being managed as part of Community Corrections as at 30 June 2021, I am advised that there were 2,122 offenders in the Far Northern Region being managed by QCS, 2,361 offenders in the Northern Region, in the Central Region there were 2,221 offenders, 2,658 offenders in the North Coast Region, in the Brisbane Region there were 3,346 offenders being managed, 3,209 offenders being managed in the Southern Region, and 3,367 offenders in the South Coast Region being managed by Community Corrections.

With regard to the number of staff allocated to working with people being managed as part of Community Corrections broken down by location, I am advised that as at 30 June 2021, there were 164 Community Corrections staff located in the Brisbane Region, 80 Community Corrections staff in the Central Region, 95 Community Corrections staff in the Far Northern Region, 121 Community Corrections staff in the Northern Region, 100 Community Corrections staff in the North Coast Region, 195 Community Corrections staff in the Southern Region, and 132 Community Corrections staff located in the South Coast Region.

With regard to how many Psychologists, Educators and Counselling Staff are currently engaged by Queensland Corrective Services I am advised that there were approximately 141 paid full-time equivalent staff on 30 June 2021.

With regard to the vacancies across QCS services, it is important to highlight that temporary vacancies, retirements and transfers occur continuously, and it is not unusual within a large department like QCS, which employs over 6,250 staff, for vacancies to exist at any given point in time. These vacancies reflect the ongoing movement of staff. When staff leave their position, either through a promotion or separating from the department, those positions are vacant for a number of weeks while recruitment processes are underway. I am advised that positions are usually filled within six to eight weeks, reflecting the general practice and timeframes for advertising (two weeks), interview and selection (two weeks), and the appointment period including police checks for the staff being appointed (two to four weeks).

Accordingly, due to the dynamic nature of this practice, it is not possible to give an accurate snapshot across the entire department at this time as to do so would require a manual assessment of each location's recruitment timelines and any current backfilling or acting arrangements.

QCS has also advised that it uses its best endeavours to fill any vacancies as soon as possible.

QCS takes the intentional damage of government property seriously and makes every attempt to limit any occurrence.

Incidents within Queensland's correctional facilities are referred to the Corrective Services Investigation Unit, Queensland Police Service (QPS).

Prisoners who intentionally damage property can be breached by QCS officers or issued a Notice to Appear before the Courts by the QPS.

With regard to the total cost of damage to QCS operated facilities caused by prisoners, I am advised that in the 2020-21 financial year the estimated cost of intentional damage was \$2,657,000. This figure, for the first time, includes the cost of any repairs at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, which in previous years was not included as before 2020-21 it was privately operated.

This cost is based on a replacement value and does not recognise that some infrastructure, fittings or property that were damaged may have been near end of life and would have had a real value that was significantly lower than the cost of replacement.

To put this figure in perspective, the acquisition cost of Queensland's prison infrastructure is \$4.486 billion, meaning the cost of intentional damage caused by prisoners was less than 0.06% of the acquisition cost.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 15

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise:

- a) The number of serious assaults (prisoner on officer) as well as the proportional percentage of this figure to the prison population for the 2020-21 financial year?
- b) The number of assaults (prisoner on officer) as well as the proportional percentage of this figure to the prison population for the 2020-21 financial year?

ANSWER:

Corrective Services Officers work in a highly dynamic and complex environment, and Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) is committed to implementing measures to increase safety and address violence within correctional centres.

Assaults on staff are never acceptable. Incidents are taken seriously and referred to the Queensland Police Service's Corrective Services Investigation Unit for investigation.

Last year, the Government passed legislation to ensure that a prisoner who assaults a working Corrective Services Officer faces up to 14 years imprisonment. This is a significant increase over the previous maximum sentence of seven years.

Additional measures implemented by QCS to address staff safety and prisoner violence include the deployment of body worn cameras and personal-issue load bearing vests; an increase in CCTV capability and substantial capital works which have increased built bed prison capacity.

I am advised that during the 2020-21 financial year there were 10 prisoner on officer serious assaults representing 0.11 percent of the prison population and 81 prisoner on officer assaults representing 0.85 percent of the prison population. That being said, one assault is one too many and QCS will continue to implement further measures to increase safety and address violence within correctional centres, and to ensure that it remains one of the best trained and equipped correctional agencies in Australasia.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 16

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise, with reference to the recommendations of the Greenfield Review:

- a) How many, and which, of the 22 recommendations have been completed and how many, and which recommendations, are in progress?
- b) How many of the 22 recommendations will not proceed and why?
- c) The total cost (including staffing) of the recommendations that have been completed or are in progress?
- d) The amount paid to consultants, including GSA Management Consulting, for work undertaken as part of the Greenfield Review?

ANSWER:

The Greenfield Review was commissioned by the Police Commissioner to determine the best policing structure to suit contemporary policing in Queensland.

The review looked at service demand, resources, the health and wellbeing of police and service delivery. The findings helped shape the Police Commissioner's vision for the Queensland Police Service with a key focus on prevention, disruption, response and investigation.

Among other things, the Greenfield Review was critical of the 2013 restructure, including the police personnel positions that were abolished under the previous LNP government. The legacy of the Newman Government's cuts to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) is long-lasting.

Regarding the Greenfield Review, I am advised that as at 30 June 2021, 21 recommendations have been implemented or have implementation in progress and one is not proceeding. The one recommendation that is not proceeding relates to the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), an agency that was established under the previous LNP government as a vehicle for privatisation and outsourcing. The PSBA was abolished on 30 June 2021.

With reference to the recommendations of the Greenfield Review, I am advised that the cost of engaging consultants for that work was \$242,990 (including GST). I am also advised that the work of the project team was met from within existing resources.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and
Emergency Services**

**ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING
QUESTION ON NOTICE**

No. 17

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise:

- a) How many sworn officers left the QPS last financial year – that is 2020-21?
- b) How many recruits were sworn in during the 2020-21 financial year?

ANSWER:

I am advised by the Queensland Police Service (QPS) that there were 326 police officer separations during the 2020-21 financial year.

I am further advised by the QPS that 443 recruits were sworn in as police officers during this same period.

I was delighted to attend a recent graduation at the Oxley Police Academy where a gathering of around 100 new police recruits about to commence their training joined around 100 graduating police recruits who had finalised their training and were about to be sworn in as new first year constables on the sacred ground.

I am informed this was the largest gathering of police recruits and graduates in the one place at the one time in over a decade.

The milestone reflects this government's record investment in police numbers – 2025 additional police personnel over five years.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 18

QUESTION:

With reference to Question on Notice Number 6 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee Parliamentary Estimates Committee Hearings of 2020, will the Minister advise, for the 2020 calendar year, (a) The total number of offences committed by juveniles in Townsville (b) The total number of individual juvenile offenders in Townsville, and (c) The total number of recidivist juvenile offenders reported in Townsville?

ANSWER:

While any instance of criminal offending is unacceptable, I am advised that the government's tough new laws, record investment in additional police personnel and police resources, and enhanced community safety initiatives and programs to target youth offending in Townsville are achieving results so far.

Taskforce Swordfish commenced in early February 2021 to target repeat juvenile and adult offenders across the State. In the initial stages of Taskforce Swordfish more than 100 police officers, including officers from the Crime and Intelligence Command, were involved in targeting property crime offenders across the Townsville District.

Townsville District is currently conducting two operations under Taskforce Swordfish. Operation Tango Pheasant and Operation Tango Frostbite.

Operation Tango Pheasant commenced in January 2021 to target property crime and Operation Tango Frostbite commenced in February 2021 to target public order and other criminal activities across Townsville.

As at 30 June 2021, Operation Tango Pheasant resulted in 484 offenders apprehended on 1,852 charges.

As at 30 June 2021, Operation Tango Frostbite resulted in 560 offenders apprehended on 1,120 charges.

Contrast these figures with the latest statistics drawn from the Queensland Police Service for FY2020-2021 when there were 3,506 offences committed by juvenile offenders, 587 individual youth offenders and 350 recidivist youth offenders.

As noted by the editorial in *The Townsville Bulletin* on 15 July: “Hundreds of people have been arrested and either locked up or given strict bail conditions and that has seen the crime numbers across Townsville drop significantly”, pointing further to a 30 per cent decrease in break-ins.

I commend frontline police in the Townsville Police District for relentlessly pursuing offenders.

This government will always back police and police efforts in the Townsville Police District by continuing to provide funding for additional police and police resources to help them keep the community safe.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 19

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise, as at 30 June 2021:

- a) The number of SES groups and volunteers classified as active,
- b) The number of SES vehicles, trailers and flood boats attached to active units?
- c) The number of active rural fire service units and active rural fire service volunteers,
- d) The number of rural fire service appliances, support vehicles and slip-on units attached to active units?

ANSWER:

It is my opinion that this question relates to multiple unrelated issues and is therefore in contravention of Standing Order 115(a) which states that questions shall be brief and relate to one issue. However, in the spirit of open and accountable government and out of respect for the Estimates process I will answer the question on this occasion.

I refer to my response to Question on Notice 230 of 2021 and am advised by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) that as at 30 June 2021, there are two additional SES groups and approximately 100 additional active State Emergency Services (SES) volunteers.

The 2021-22 SES budget has increased by almost 7% compared to the previous year and Queensland's hard-working SES volunteers are supported by more than 1,300 SES vehicles, trailers and flood boats.

Further, QFES has advised there are almost 1,400 Rural Fire Service (RFS) Brigades, and over 30,000 RFS volunteers.

These Brigades are supported by a record \$58.7 million 2021-22 RFS budget and almost 5,000 RFS appliances, support vehicles and slip-on units.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services ESTIMATES PRE-HEARING QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 20

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise, with regard to the Blue Water review:

- a) Have the criteria for determining which Coastguard and VMR vessels will be replaced been decided and, if so;
- I. What the criteria are?
 - II. When the criteria were finalised?
 - III. How many current vessels meet the criteria
 - IV. Where those vessels are located

ANSWER:

This government has committed \$35.38 million to establish an integrated marine rescue service. The funding includes \$17.38 million for vessel replacement which, for the benefit of the committee, can be found on SDS 1-6, of the 2020-21 State Budget.

Following the government's election commitment in late 2020, a Marine Rescue Implementation Working Group was established in February 2021 to determine the future needs of flotillas and squadrons across the state.

In less than 6 months, the Working Group has undertaken a significant volume of work.

This work is ongoing based on the following agreed key principles:

- To move towards standardisation of the fleet and a centralised procurement approach; and
- To prioritise procurement based on local needs, knowledge and existing Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland procurement schedules.

These key principles are being progressed by a Fleet Sub Working Group.

I am further advised that Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is visiting flotillas and squadrons across the state to provide advice on vessel replacement priorities and develop vessel build standards ahead of the delivery of replacement vessels.

I commend all key stakeholders for engaging with the Working Group.

By working together, in partnership, we are best placed to achieve outcomes that are in everyone's best interests and importantly, in the interests of community safety.

**Answers to questions taken on notice at hearing –
12 August 2021**

12 August 2021

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice – Question taken on notice

Question: (refer to Hansard p20). In that sense then, has there been a decline in the number of private practitioners applying, noting I think that there is currently a round open at the moment for people wishing to apply to put themselves on the panel?

In terms of answering that, would you be able to take the number of people, say, from 2018 to the current process up to 30 June 2021?

Answer:

- The number of preferred supplier law firms contracted with Legal Aid Queensland varies through a financial year.
- As at 30 June 2018 there were 361 active preferred supplier law firms contracted with Legal Aid Queensland.
- As at 30 June 2021 there were 339 active preferred supplier law firms contracted with Legal Aid Queensland.
- Applications for Legal Aid Queensland preferred supplier status for the period to 31 July 2024 are currently being considered.

Documents tabled at hearing – 12 August 2021

Documents tabled at the hearing – 12 August 2021	
1.	Right to Information email dated 23 March 2021 – Request for Invoices – Norton Rose Fulbright, tabled by Laura Gerber MP, Deputy Chair
2.	Media article, The Courier-Mail, dated 5 July 2021 – ‘Queensland detectives create huge sex abuse database to help fight crime’, tabled by Hon Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
3.	Queensland Police Service Annual Report for Assumed Identity Authorisation and Use 2020/2021, tabled by Hon Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
4.	Rural Fire Service Volunteer Brigades’ Charter, tabled by Hon Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
5.	Legal Observer Report: Policing of the Land Forces Protests dated 21 June 2021, tabled by Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar
6.	IGEM – Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland, tabled by Hon Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services