

# Executive Summary

This is a report of quarterly statutory inspections of the Brisbane, Cleveland, and West Moreton Youth Detention Centres (BYDC, CYDC, and WMYDC). Statutory detention centre inspections are conducted by delegated Inspectors, located within Learning and Development, which at the time of writing the report are located in Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA).

Inspections conducted during the December quarter each year are to verify the progress of implementing recommendations previously made by the Inspectorate and accepted by Youth Detention Operations and Reform (YDOR). The verification process involves Inspectors interviewing youth detention staff across relevant occupational groups, reviewing policies, procedures, and data, visiting accommodation units to speak with staff and young people, and engaging with other teams in the department where relevant.

The on-site inspections occurred at CYDC from 28 November to 2 December 2022, at WMYDC from 5 to 7 December 2022, and at BYDC from 12 to 16 December 2022. The BYDC inspection was conducted in part, remotely, due to one of the Inspectors contracting COVID-19. See Appendix C for the profile of each detention centre at the time of inspection.

Overall, the youth detention centres have made progress in relation to several recommendations, with a number of high priority projects currently underway to address major challenges including staff shortages, recruitment and selection, separations, and suicide risk processes.

The status of active recommendations from previous reports are detailed in the Recommendations Register at Appendix A.

At the time of the December 2022 inspections, there were 29 open recommendations, relating to safety and security of centres, education, programs and reintegration, workforce capability and development, and collaboration and information sharing. Of this total, eight were joint recommendations relevant to BYDC and CYDC and 21 were relevant to all three centres.

A total of 12 recommendations will be closed with four being superseded by more contemporary recommendations or adapted to acknowledge progress and reflect current system improvement needs.

## **Other Observations and Issues**

The Inspectorate raises observations and issues on-site during the inspection, directly with staff throughout the inspections, with the Executive Directors at the exit interviews, and with the Senior Executive Director, Office of the Senior Executive Director, YDOR at the preliminary finding's meeting. Issues are monitored through the Issues Register (Appendix B), which outlines the response action/s taken by centre management and/or YDOR.

There were seven open issues in relation to staff shortages, young people's access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), information sharing within the centre and across departments, recruitment and retention of operational staff, referrals to the Professional Standards Unit (PSU), dietary needs of young people, and staff awareness of Youth Detention Inspectorate (YDI) recommendations. These issues were reviewed, with three to be closed.

New issues and observations raised during the December 2022 Inspection include:

## **Consultation Processes**

Increased consultation with YDC staff when youth detention centre policies and procedures are reviewed and updated centrally was a common theme that arose from review of outstanding recommendations during the December 2022 inspection. Representatives across work groups, including other Queensland Government departments on centre, expressed a keen interest in being more involved in consultation processes to ensure updates or changes meet the practical needs of the centres. The Inspectorate acknowledge a variety of governance and consultation mechanisms exist in YDCs to enable staff and stakeholder input and encourage an ongoing focus on effective consultation to inform policy and procedure review and implementation and YDI recommendations.

### **New Recommendation - Recording of Separations**

The Inspectorate noted during the inspections and post-inspection data triangulation, that each centre records their use of separations differently with feedback indicating this is due to limitations within the Detention Centre Operational Information System (DCOIS).

Given the inconsistencies in separation record keeping across and within each centre, the Inspectorate recommends a clearer procedural process on how and when all separations are to be recorded in DCOIS, and an analysis be conducted as to whether DCOIS can be enhanced to support improved record keeping in relation to separations.

### **New Recommendation – Suicide and self-harm risk management**

Two open recommendations regarding suicide and self-harm have been partially completed<sup>1</sup>. As a result, these recommendations will be closed and superseded with a new recommendation that combines the outstanding components. The new recommendation includes completion of a more thorough review of the suicide and self-harm risk management policy, including consultation with partner agencies, inclusion of contemporary, evidence-based models, a review of interjurisdictional practices, the development and implementation of specific practice resources to support in the assessment and management of suicide risk across occupational groups, and clear definitions of the behaviours displayed by YP to justify risk recommendations. This process will align with the extensive work undertaken by the Court and Regional Operations Practice Support (CROPS) team in developing an operational policy and procedure for Youth Justice staff in identifying, recording, and managing suicide risk for young people in the community that included extensive consultation with Q Health and other partner agencies.

### **New Recommendation – Base control operations**

During the December 2022 verification of Recommendation 2, October 2021 (Alert Prioritisation), the Inspectorate experienced challenges in accessing any formal or current documentation relating to the training provided to support the role of the base control operator. It was noted there is a reliance on experienced staff members passing on information, and training new staff based on their own first-hand knowledge through word of mouth, as opposed to a documented process. Given the important role this position has in relation to maintaining centre security, it is recommended each YDC formalise a training or procedure manual relevant to their centre that relates to the role of the base control operator to ensure consistency of practice between relevant staff at each YDC. The Inspectorate accept that the

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation 1, March 2021 – BYDC and CYDC (Suicide Risk Priorities) and Recommendation 7, October 2021 – BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Suicide Risk and Self-Harm Policy)

training or procedure manual will be different for each centre and will be dependent on their individual operating systems and technology available.

## List of closed recommendations

<p><b>June 2019 - Rec 3 BYDC and CYDC (Reintegration Planning for Remandees)</b></p>
<p>It is recommended that both centres develop reintegration plans for suitable young people on long-term remand, using a common risk assessment tool to assess the appropriateness of reintegration Leave of Absences (LOAs) and other reintegration activities as part of these plans.</p>
<p><b>March 2020 - Rec 4 BYDC and CYDC (Restorative Practice and Trauma Informed Practice Training Prioritisation)</b></p>
<p>It is recommended that Restorative Practice and Trauma Informed Practice training is prioritised to ensure all staff, including executive and management at BYDC and CYDC attend the two-day Restorative Practice General Training at a minimum, and Trauma Informed Practice training when available. Additional initiatives to further embed Restorative Practice and Trauma Informed Practice as a way of working may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying suitable staff to attend the two-week Restorative Justice Accreditation Training (adapted for detention centres) and mentoring phase to become skilled in facilitation of formal Restorative Practice meetings within a detention centre.</li> <li>• Designated 'out of ratio' staff members (e.g. Section Supervisors) who are trained in facilitating Restorative Practice meetings who can embed Restorative Practice techniques as daily routine in each unit and run Restorative Practice meetings.</li> <li>• Cultural Liaison Officers and staff assigned to suitable duties, where appropriate, are trained in the facilitation of formal Restorative Practice meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>June 2020 - Rec 1 BYDC and CYDC (Inter-Departmental Collaboration – Mental Health and Disabilities Services)</b></p>
<p>It is recommended that continued discussions occur with the relevant agencies (Youth Justice, Queensland Health, NDIA, Department of Education and Department of Child Safety) to continue to develop an integrated and coordinated partnership approach to addressing health and developmental needs (specifically in the context of neurodevelopmental impairment/disability) of young people within the youth justice system, particularly high risk young people and resolving current barriers in service provision.</p> <p>It is further recommended that Youth Detention Operations explore opportunities to improve communication and continue to build on and develop relationships across agencies to enhance the provision of paediatric services and comprehensive neurodevelopmental assessments.</p>
<p><b>June 2020 - Rec 3 BYDC and CYDC (Workforce Capability – Managing Complex Behaviours)</b></p>
<p>It is recommended that Youth Detention and Operations engage with and address the full results of the UQ survey once finalised and explore training and professional development opportunities for all operational and professional staff to increase workforce capability and</p>

confidence in managing behaviours associated with neurodevelopmental and other cognitive impairments.

**March 2021 – Rec 1 BYDC and CYDC (Suicide Risk Practices)**

- a) Where possible, immediate actions are put in place to address the gaps in identifying and recording suicide events, suicide observations and training currency due to the critical consequences that may result
- b) A review of the current policy in relation to suicide and self-harm risk prevention to ensure information is contemporary, in line with current evidence and feedback from partner agencies involved in the suicide prevention process within the detention centres has been considered.

Note: Part A of this recommendation is closed and Part B has been superseded.

**March 2021 – Rec 5 BYDC and CYDC (Planned incident controller training and practices)**

- b) Incident review, in addition to focusing on causes and preventative and measures leading up to an incident, also focuses on the management throughout the entirety of the incident to identify opportunities to efficiently manage incidents to minimise impacts on centre operations, young people and staff safety.

Note: Part A of this recommendation remains open

**October 2021 – Rec 1 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Roles and responsibilities of the Practice Support Managers and Client Relations Advisors)**

A review of resourcing, roles and responsibilities required to monitor and respond to security alerts, incident management and review processes.

**October 2021 – Rec 2 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Alert Prioritisation)**

A clear alert prioritisation policy is developed and implemented to identify, address, and respond to security risks captured by Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and other on-centre alarms (e.g., doors left opened).

**October 2021 – Rec 7 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Suicide Risk and Self-Harm Policy)**

The current review of the suicide and self-harm policy be extended to explore evidence-based models which support clear definitions of the behaviours displayed by young people to justify risk recommendations.

Note: This recommendation is closed and has been superseded.

**October 2021 – Rec 8 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Suicide Prevention Toolkit)**

The Suicide Prevention Toolkit developed by the Court and Regional Operations Practice Support team (CROPS) and the suicide risk procedures associated with it, be reviewed, and extended to include YDCs.

**October 2021 – Rec 10 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Cultural Supports)**

Identify opportunities for the Cultural Capability and People and Culture Teams within Central Office to support YDC Cultural Units and CLOs, with a more sustainable, whole of team approach.

**March 2022 – Rec 2 BYDC/CYDC/WMYDC (Behaviour Management: Use of Force, Restraints and Separations)**

Review of the existing incident report training package provided to staff to improve the quality of reporting, increase accountability, and ensure consistency of practice across all detention centres.