

Executive Summary

This is a report of a quarterly statutory inspection of the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre (CYDC). The on-site inspection occurred from 24 to 28 September 2018. Statutory detention centre inspections are conducted by delegated inspectors located within Governance, Corporate Services. A report of each inspection is provided to the Director-General.

The focus areas under inspection in this quarter were Education and Training, Programs and Purposeful Activity, the Use of Force, and Incident/Harm reporting processes in relation to young people. In gathering evidence Inspectors visited all units over the inspection week and spoke with staff and young people in each. In addition, separate focus groups were held with approximately 40 staff and 10 young people.

The Inspectorate's focus in the first two areas of education and programs concentrated on outcomes; for example, the attainment of qualification and the extent to which there is seamless transition for young people to continue education and programs commenced before, during and after their detention periods.

The key observations, findings and recommendations in relation to the focus areas are summarised below. All recommendations made in this report have been either accepted or accepted in principle by Youth Justice.

Focus Area 1 – Education and Training

Advice from Education Queensland (EQ) stakeholders was that young people scheduled to attend school on centre generally did attend. However, only 75% of young people on centre are able to go to school. Before November 2016, 100% of young people were able to go school and largely did. The centre afterwards restricted program sizes from six students to four in an effort to improve security by maintaining the 1:4 staff supervision ratio at all times. This arrangement remains in place, and combined with a reduction in classroom space due to increased population levels this year and ongoing staffing shortages, means that EQ is not able to teach as many students as it could and is funded for.

Advice from EQ indicated that the school remains creative in matching all the subjects it can to certificate I or II level qualifications for young people while they are on centre; however, VET delivery at large remained impeded by lack of funding, on-centre service provision and post-release continuity. The report makes a recommendation to increase capacity in this regard.

Focus Area 2 – Programs and Purposeful Activity

There was some good evidence of increased program delivery at CYDC although this area was also beset by staffing shortages and lack of space. Young people wanted more in the way of job and life skills, although the recent life skills initiative is to be commended. There was evidently more delivery of recreational style programs than therapeutic, with a variety of suggestions and recommendations made by staff and the Inspectorate in this regard.

Focus Area 3 – Use of Force

No significant issues emerged in relation to this focus area and no recommendations are made.

Focus Area 4 – Incident Reporting (includes Harm Reporting)

No significant issues emerged in relation to this focus area and no recommendations are made.

Other Issues

A number of other issues were observed by inspectors. Notable issues include:

- security issues related to staffing and visibility in adjoining eight-bed units
- tropical health risks associated with the introduction of scabies
- lack of reintegration opportunities raised by an individual young person.