

Office of the Director-General

## Response to the Youth Detention Inspectorate March 2017 Reports of Brisbane and Cleveland Youth Detention Centres

Youth Justice welcomes the Youth Detention Inspectorate Reports for the March 2017 quarter.

In order for the youth justice system in Queensland to be effective in addressing the underlying causes of offending, there must be rigorous oversight mechanisms to ensure young people in detention are managed appropriately, safely and securely in accordance with the *Youth Justice Act 1992* and the *Youth Justice Regulation 2016*.

The March 2017 quarterly reports identified two new recommendations for the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre and three new recommendations for the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre. Please find enclosed the Department's response to each of those recommendations.

As we know, youth detention can at times be volatile and challenging environments for staff who work with young people in the youth justice system.

Youth Justice is committed to continuous improvement to ensure services evolve with contemporary best practice.

Youth Justice is also actively working on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Independent Review of Youth Detention and the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre Incident Investigation.

This work complements the significant reforms Youth Justice have undertaken since 2015 in recognition that an effective youth justice system could not be determined by compliance alone but must provide real outcomes for young people that lead to positive changes in their lives.

I want to thank the Youth Detention Inspectorate for their work in compiling these reports for the March 2017 quarter which contribute to the effectiveness of youth detention in Queensland and provide better outcomes for young people in the youth justice system.

I also want to thank youth detention staff who work in these challenging environments on a daily basis and who are committed to improving the lives of those young people who they work with.

Sean Harvey  
**Assistant Director-General**  
**Youth Justice**  
**Department of Justice and Attorney-General**

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## Brisbane Youth Detention Centre (BYDC)

The March 2017 quarter Inspectorate report identified two recommendations for BYDC

Recommendation	Youth Justice Response
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> That Youth Justice seek expert advice from Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to evaluate and provide input and advice in relation to the standard of training being provided to youth detention staff in the use of PPE for defensive purposes.</p>	<p><b>Accepted and in progress</b></p> <p>Youth Justice accepts this recommendation and will commence discussions with QCS and QPS.</p> <p>In doing so, paramount consideration will be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• best practice and evidenced based positive behaviour management strategies, and</li> <li>• the need for incident management responses to be trauma informed and culturally appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Staff and young people are issued with a directive advising them that the covering of cameras is to cease immediately, and that further infractions will attract a consequence, and; That BYDC resolve the privacy curtain issue forthwith so that young people are less driven to compromise centre security by covering cameras.</p>	<p><b>Accepted and in progress</b></p> <p>Youth Justice accepts this recommendations and a directive has been issued to staff in relation to the covering of cameras.</p> <p>Privacy curtains, for use by young people, have been purchased and are currently being installed.</p> <p>Additionally, security systems are being upgraded at Brisbane Youth Detention Centre. This includes the installation of additional CCTV surveillance cameras in accommodation rooms and audio capture in common areas. This will promote the safety of young people and staff and support more effective incident prevention and behaviour monitoring strategies.</p>

## Cleveland Youth detention Centre (CYDC)

The March 2017 Inspectorate report identifies 3 recommendations for CYDC.

Recommendation	Youth Justice Response
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> That Youth Justice seek expert advice from Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to evaluate and provide input and advice in relation to the standard of training being provided to youth detention staff in the use of PPE for defensive purposes.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Youth Justice accepts this recommendation and will commence discussions with QCS and QPS.</p> <p>In doing so, paramount consideration will be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• best practice and evidenced based positive behaviour management strategies, and</li> <li>• the need for incident management responses to be trauma informed and culturally appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> To assist with the safe management of the centre that suitable training is provided to relevant staff positions that could be expected to act as incident controllers during significant incidents. Such training should provide staff with the skills and confidence to manage incidents that have the potential to escalate rapidly. Consideration should be given to training shift supervisors, all members of the centre’s management team, and primary stakeholders such as the Nurse Unit Manager and School principal. The training should be provided by persons with relevant credentials and experience, for example, representatives from QCS and/or QPS. Any training provided should be relevant to the requirements of the <i>Youth Justice Act 1992</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Regulation 2016</i> as well as any United Nations Conventions to which Australia is signatory.</p>	<p><b>Accepted and in progress</b></p> <p>Youth Justice accepts this recommendation and work is currently underway to review risk assessment processes, staff training requirements, positive behaviour management (including rewards and consequences) and emergency management procedures. The associated training curriculum will be reviewed and updated as part of this process.</p> <p>Youth Justice will also establish centre-based ‘Practice Leaders’ (an initiative successfully trialled in other youth justice jurisdictions) to support best practice and to coach and mentor staff where required.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> That the Executive Director CYDC authorise a structured range of programs as well as activities for young people at times when they are not attending school.</p> <p>Programs should be age appropriate and assist with the rehabilitation and transition from detention. Input from the young people and staff should be included in the development of any program or activities.</p>	<p><b>Accepted and in progress</b></p> <p>CYDC currently reviews the structured day programming on a weekly basis to consider any emerging issues. This is coordinated with on-centre education staff to ensure the quality delivery of education and program services to all young people.</p> <p>Recent programming changes include the delivery of cultural-specific developmental programs being delivered within a yarning circle environment and other programs spaces in the accommodation units.</p> <p>Through multi agency forums, CYDC is also engaging service providers to facilitate education based programs in the accommodation units when young people are not attending programs at the structured day precinct. This has been a recent development and will continue to be explored and utilised to improve programming opportunities for young people.</p> <p>To enhance the quality and effectiveness of locally developed programs and services, Youth Justice also introduced the Standardised Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) in 2016. SPEP is a validated rating system used to determine how well a program matches the research evidence on reducing recidivism. It also predicts the likelihood that a program will reduce recidivism and points to improvements that can be made to enhance program effectiveness. SPEP highlights systemic improvements that must be made to support effective program and service delivery.</p>
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