

Executive Summary to Inspection Report Brisbane Youth Detention Centre September quarter 2014

Under section 263 (1) of the *Youth Justice Act 1992*, the chief executive is responsible for the security and management of each youth detention centre and the safe custody and wellbeing of children detained in these centres. Section 263 (4) states that the chief executive must monitor the operation of the detention centres and inspect each detention centre at least once every 3 months.

The inspection function for youth detention centres is delegated to Inspectors of the Youth Detention Inspectorate, Ethical Standards Unit.

The statutory inspection of the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre (BYDC) occurred from 22-26 September 2014. The primary focus areas were:

- Emergency Response Equipment
- Complaints Management Process
- The Reporting of Harm
- The Secure Transportation Vehicle.

The inspection criteria was derived from the approved Youth Detention Expectations document, which is informed by relevant Queensland legislation, United Nations Rules and Standards to which Australia is a signatory.

In reference to the four focus areas the following was found.

Emergency Response Equipment

It was identified that there is a range of Emergency Response Equipment at BYDC. The equipment consists of mechanical restraints, Personal Protective Equipment, and specialised power and hand tools.

It was found that the equipment is appropriately stored in a secure location at the centre and is audited by a Shift Supervisor on a weekly basis.

It was also found that Youth Detention Operations is leading a review on the use of emergency equipment in Queensland youth detention centres. The review involves consultation with the Centre Executive Directors of Brisbane and Cleveland Youth Detention Centres, representatives of the Queensland Police Service and non-government service providers.

Complaints Management Process

It was found that the centre has a range of complaints mechanisms in place that young people can either lodge a formal or an informal complaint. The range includes access to the Office of the Public Guardian, through the Community Visitor Scheme or a direct telephone line which the young people can access daily.

Other avenues for complaints include the young person's Caseworker, centre staff, the young person's legal representative, Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, staff from other agencies such as school teachers, medical doctors and nurses. Overall the findings for this focus area were positive with no recommendations being made in relation to compliance, and only one recommendation being made as an opportunity for continuous improvement.

Reporting of Harm

The reporting of harm is a statutory requirement under the *Youth Justice Act 1992*. This focus area is inspected on a regular basis as the department takes incidents of harm of young people in detention seriously. It was found that the Youth Detention Operations Manual provides detailed guidance on the risks of harm occurring in youth detention.

It was also found that there is a strong awareness among the Multi-Disciplinary Team members in relation to what factors can contribute to harm. There were no issues identified in this area.

The Secure Transportation Vehicle

The Secure Transportation Vehicle was inspected to ensure that young people are transported safely and securely during off centre escorts. The Inspectors found that the Secure Transportation Vehicle security systems have recently been upgraded to provide a higher level of safety and security.

The Inspectors made one recommendation which includes fitting the Secure Transportation Vehicle with electronic monitoring equipment such as Closed Circuit Television cameras and two way monitors, which would provide staff with improved monitoring capability. Other recommendations include an intercom system for the escort officer and the young people to communicate to each other, and improved procedures particularly for long distance escorts to communities such as Cherbourg.