

## Executive Summary to Inspection Report Brisbane Youth Detention Centre June 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 is delegated to Inspectors of the Youth Detention Inspectorate, Ethical Standards Unit.

The statutory inspection of the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre (BYDC) occurred from 5-10 May 2014. The primary focus area was Staff and Young People Relationships. The monitored area was Use of Force on Young People. Inspection criteria were derived from the approved Youth Detention Expectations document, which is informed by relevant legislation and United Nations instruments to which Australia is a signatory.

During the inspection the Inspectors were able to speak openly and frankly to the young people without interference by staff members, which the Inspectors regard as a positive indicator in relation to positive relationships with the young people. Inspectors identified that the vast majority of young people spoken to reported appropriately positive experiences with staff at BYDC. Inspectors also noted that there are a range of process and opportunities in place through which young people can make formal or informal complaints if they do experience inappropriate behaviour or mistreatment by staff members. Positively, the Inspectors also observed first hand numerous healthy interactions on a daily basis between staff and young people. Following concerns raised by a group of female detainees about the then-proximate accommodation to their unit of several young males convicted of rape offences, a suggestion was made to ensure such arrangements are avoided in future where possible.

In relation to the use of physical force on a young people, operational staff have now been trained in the Protective Actions Continuum (PAC). The training primarily teaches staff self defence and control and restraint techniques, along with legislative requirements for using force in the youth detention centres and some de-escalation skills. Following some preliminary data analysis in this report, but as a general *desideratum* regardless, the Inspectorate has suggested that the more physical techniques contained in PAC training could be usefully complemented by more verbal non-escalation training in an effort to minimise the use of force and associated injuries and costs.