



Annual Client Complaints Report

2018-19

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Introduction

Section 219A of the *Public Service Act 2008*, requires all public sector agencies to maintain a complaints management system for their customers. Queensland Corrective Services records complaints using the Resolve Complaints Management System.

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?

For Queensland Corrective Services (QCS), customer complaints include complaints received from prisoners, offenders, their families and friends, non-government service providers, other visitors to correctional centres or members of the public who may have had contact with the Department. It also includes complaints received anonymously and those received via Ministerial or Commissioner correspondence.

A customer complaint is defined as a complaint about the service or action of a department, or its staff, by a person who is apparently directly affected by the service or action; and includes, for example, a complaint about any of the following:

- a decision made, or a failure to make a decision, by a public service employee of the department;
- an act, or failure to act, of the department;
- the formulation of a proposal or intention by the department;
- the making of a recommendation by the department; and
- the customer service provided by a public service employee of the department.

COMPLAINT REPORTING

Each central office business unit, Custodial Operations and Community Corrections location is required to identify, record and assess complaints using Resolve.

Queensland Corrective Services aims to finalise the majority of complaints within a 30 working day timeframe.

Complaints pertaining to allegations of fraud, corruption or official misconduct are referred to the Integrity and Professional Standards Command and are not recorded in Resolve.

Similarly, complaints which are considered to be employee grievances are referred to Human Resources and are not recorded in Resolve.

Matters which are subject to statutory rights of review are excluded from the complaints process.

Complaints logged in Resolve are assigned an issue/issues which then allows for the identification of trends/systemic issues across the Department. The complaints issues identified in Resolve reflect key areas of operational service.

QCS is represented on the Human Rights Interdepartmental Committee – Complaints sub group. Consideration will be given by QCS to incorporating the required amendments to the current complaint management procedure.

OFFICIAL VISITORS

Part 6, Chapter 6 of the *Corrective Services Act 2006*, establishes the role of the Official Visitor as independent members of the community tasked with visiting corrective services facilities at least monthly to receive and investigate complaints made by prisoners about their treatment while in custody. Official Visitors work initially with the correctional centre to try and resolve the issue raised by the prisoner. Official Visitors report through the Office of the Chief Inspector, another appointed position under the *Corrective Services Act 2006*.

Official Visitors provide reports on the matters investigated through a database managed by the Office of the Chief Inspector. This report does not include data on complaints received by Official Visitors.



ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

Pursuant to section 219A(3) of the *Public Service Act 2008*, public sector agencies are required to publish an annual complaints report by 30 September each year.

At a minimum, reporting must include:

- the number of customer complaints received by the department during the financial year;
- the number of those complaints resulting in further action; and
- the number of those complaints resulting in no further action.

This report satisfies these requirements.

Complaint Numbers

During 2018-19, QCS received 875 complaints, averaging 73 complaints per month.

The overwhelming majority of complaints received during the last 12 months were registered by correctional centres.

FIGURE 1 – NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED DURING 2018-19 BY MONTH

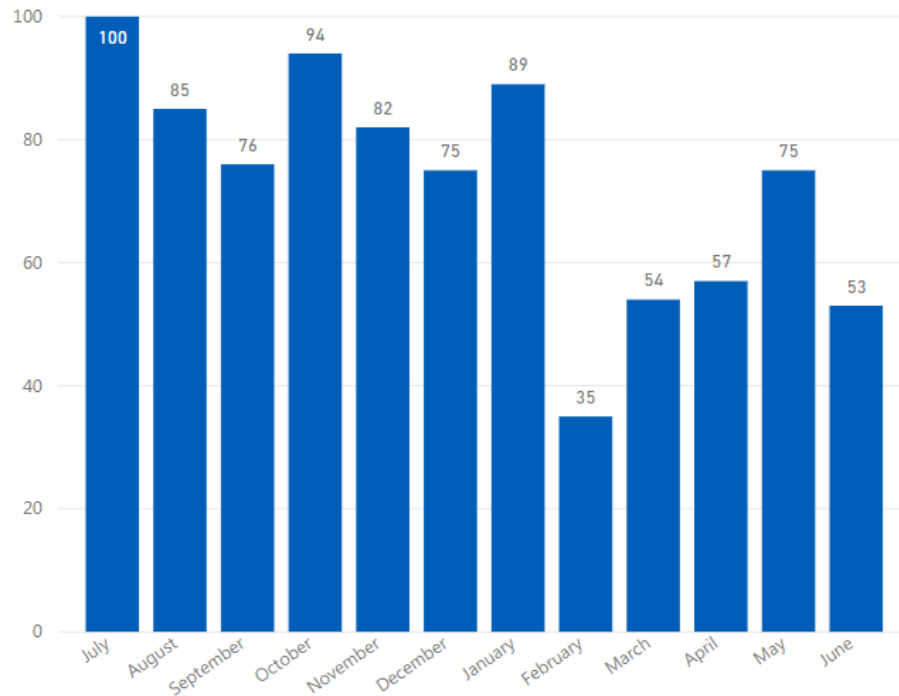


FIGURE 2 – DISTRIBUTION OF COMPLAINTS

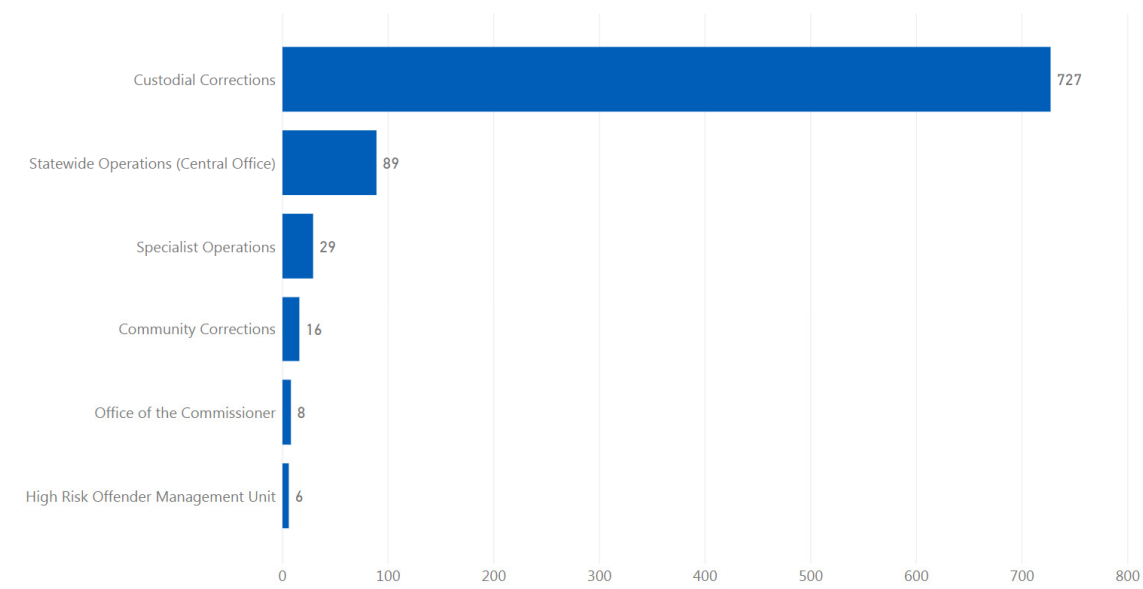


TABLE 1 – NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

	Statewide Operations (Central Office)	High Risk Offender Management Unit	Custodial Corrections	Community Corrections	Specialist Operations	Office of the Chief Inspector	Office of the Commissioner	Organisational Capability	Parole Board Secretariat	Total
Total	89	6	727	16	29	0	8	0	0	875
% of total	10.2%	0.7%	83.1%	1.8%	3.3%	0.00%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%



Complaint Issues

There were a total of 917 complaint issues identified in the 875 complaints received during 2018-19.

The majority of complaints received during 2018-19 relate to 'Offender Management' issues (67.4%).

The below table reports complaints received during 2018-19, presented by issue:

TABLE 2 – NUMBER OF COMPLAINT ISSUES

	Access to property	Employment	Minors	Offender Management	Offender Programs	Offender Release	Search	Staff	Visitors and Liaison	Other	To be confirmed / matter under investigation	Total ¹
Total	11	26	2	618	20	2	8	88	79	54	9	917

Notes:

1. There may be more than one issue recorded per complaint. Therefore, the totals recorded in Table 1 may differ to those recorded in Table 2.

Complaint Outcomes

Of the complaints received during 2018-19, 49 (or 5.6%) remain open/unresolved. Of the 826 complaints finalised, 379 were not substantiated (45.9% of finalised complaints).

A smaller proportion of complaints were either substantiated or partially substantiated (31.5% combined total of finalised complaints).

TABLE 3 – OUTCOME OF COMPLAINTS FINALISED

	Outcome	Total	% of finalised complaints
Further Action	Complaint substantiated	82	9.9%
	Complaint partially substantiated	178	21.5%
	Conciliation/mediation	63	7.6%
	Referred or made to another Agency	35	4.2%
	Other	31	3.8%
No further action	Complaint unable to be contacted	15	1.8%
	Complaint not substantiated	379	45.9%
	Frivolous/vexatious	12	1.5%
	Insufficient information provided	24	2.9%
	Withdrawn by complaint	7	0.8%
	Complaints still open/ongoing ¹	49	
	Total	875	
	Complaints resulting in further action	389	47.1%
	Complaints resulting in no further action	437	52.9%