



AUTUMN 2025

POLICE **UNION** JOURNAL

DISASTER DEPUTY SLIDES INTO SEAT AS ACTING COMMISSIONER



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COVER STORY

DEPUTY DISASTER TAKES A CURVEBALL FOR COMMISSIONER

It was a phone call that left him numb, Police Commissioner Steve Gollschewski asking his valued State Disaster Co-ordinator if he'd accept a curveball and take on the top job in the QPS while he took extended leave to begin cancer treatment.

CONTENTS

General President & CEO	2
South East Region Roundup	5
Far Northern Region Roundup	7
North Coast Region Roundup	10
Central Region Roundup	13
Northern Region Roundup	16
Southern Region Roundup	18
Headquarters & Support Region Roundup	22
Metro North Region Roundup	25
Metro South Region Roundup	27
EB	30
Watchhouse	36
Commissioner's Story	38
Police Federation of Australia	46
QR Code	47
Graduation Day March	48
Why QPU DFV	58
Stand alone offence	60
Blueprint	62
Graduation Day February	113
Gnech	126
Police Health Fees	129
G&L	132
Australia Day Honours	135
Graduation Day January	138
NZ police Murder	148
QRPA	151

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SHANE PRIOR

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THE MAIN CONCERN FOR POLICE IN QUEENSLAND AT THE MOMENT IS SECURING A DEAL THAT BENEFITS ALL OUR MEMBERS THROUGH THE NEXT ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.

Negotiations between the Union and the Service are underway. The offer currently stands as a base salary increase of 3% the first year, followed by 2.5% increases in years two and three of the Agreement.

Regrettably, I cannot divulge specific details regarding potential outcomes at this stage, as negotiations remain ongoing.

Rest assured, however, the Union's priorities are to secure a base pay increase commensurate with those in other jurisdictions, and to improve the working conditions of all members. Particular emphasis will be placed on frontline and General Duties officers.

The stark reality is in the first six weeks of this year, 31 General Duties officers resigned from the Service. During my regular branch meetings across the state, Constables repeatedly express their disillusionment. They joined the Service to be police officers, not social workers. They are experiencing burnout from the DFV workload in particular.

Make no mistake – policing in this State is on the brink of collapse!

Across the Eastern seaboard, there are approximately 7,000 vacancies for frontline police. We are in the midst of a recruitment crisis across Australia, exacerbated by the number of officers leaving the job.

Attracting recruits to the academies is futile if we cannot retain them for at

least ten years; these are the frontline officers who train and support our newest recruits.

Everywhere I travel, I hear about the devastating impact of domestic and family violence, not just on victims but on the well-being of our officers. We join this profession to assist others, to protect them, and to improve their lives. Carrying this burden takes a toll on our own mental and physical health. This burden is compounded when we encounter situations where we attempt to help but are thwarted by red tape and bureaucratic obstacles.

DFV has emerged as the foremost challenge confronting our frontline officers. They are constantly responding to DFV incidents, knowing in some areas they face a backlog of around 200 unresourced jobs, two-thirds of which are DFV-related. This is a daily occurrence.

Queensland is nine years into a ten-year Government strategy to reduce DFV, yet the figures continue to escalate. DFV fatigue is a significant factor in the departure of constables and senior constables from the Queensland Police Service. Quite simply, change is imperative.

Our 2024 Annual State Conference also recognised this imperative, unanimously passing the following motion:

"That the Queensland Police Union gain the support of the Commissioner of Police to press both sides of politics for the new offence of "Commit Domestic Violence".

Also at the 2024 Conference, Commissioner Gollschewski revealed the difficulty QPS had faced with other government departments and the DFV Sector in its attempts to bring Police Protection Directions. While the Commissioner indicated he would keep at it he stated that the QPU is ‘a significantly influential body in this state in terms of what governments listen to. You need to use that influence.’

It is for these reasons on 13 February 2025, the QPU launched a statewide public campaign to “Make DFV a crime every time”, underpinned by an e-petition on the Queensland Parliament website. At the close of our e-petition on 28 March almost 50,000 Queenslanders had added their voices to our urgent call to action. This result is among the best ever achieved for an e-petition and is a significant demonstration of public support for the QPU campaign.

This initiative was undertaken not only to assist and protect victims but to effect meaningful changes to the red tape, policy, and legislation that hinders police officers and leaves victims wanting.

It is crucial to highlight to the community and politicians the impact of DFV on our society and on police attraction and retention rates. The Crisafulli Government is committed to reducing victim numbers. I applaud this commitment, but I question how they expect to achieve it when our frontline officers are perpetually responding to DFV incidents, leaving no time for other duties.

Our road toll is at its highest in a decade: when was the last time you were subjected to a roadside breath test?

Juvenile crime is rampant: when was the last time you conducted a proactive patrol?

It is no wonder the community lives in fear, as police are no longer able to engage with the public.

Police are no longer a visible presence in our neighbourhoods, a fact criminals are exploiting.

The QPU Blueprint for Action provided the narrative for our statewide campaign and was a living document throughout, with refinement and iterations over several months based on numerous discussions and meetings with QPU members, sector stakeholders, victim survivors, politicians and academics. The final version of the Blueprint is available on our website and is also included in this edition of the QPU Journal.

This extensive consultation allowed me to understand system wide issues from various perspectives and has led to a more informed suite of suggestions. The Blueprint for Action contains sensible proposals to enhance whole of system responses to DFV by alleviating pressure on frontline services, holding DFV offenders accountable, and, importantly, better protecting and supporting victim survivors.

Although our statewide advertising campaign and e-petition for DFV reform has concluded, the QPU’s journey has not. We will continue our advocacy for meaningful reforms to the DFV system and will closely monitor delivery of the Government’s law and order election commitments and response to our e-petition. This is what Queensland Police Officers and the thousands of community members who supported our campaign would expect of us.

While the Government has until 1 May 2025 to formally respond to our e-petition to “Make DFV a crime every time”, our campaign is already delivering results with a significant Government announcement about the way police will soon be responding to domestic and family violence in this State.

Minister Amanda Camm, who is responsible for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and the administration of the Domestic

and Family Violence Protection Act, and Police Minister, Dan Purdie have announced the introduction of Police Protection Directions, as proposed in the QPU Blueprint for Action on DFV, to cut the bureaucracy and red tape associated with PPNs and applications for orders under the current, broken system – changes we fought for and the government has now embraced.

Additionally, Acting Commissioner Shane Chelepy gave an undertaking to overhaul internal QPS processes “There has to be changes, because the current way we do our internal processes isn’t good enough at the moment. It’s placing such a burden on our Officers, we have to streamline it internally.”

I acknowledge Commissioner Gollschewski and Acting Commissioner Chelepy who have also recognised the urgent need for reform and have not shied away from the critical review of the Service’s internal DFV processes.

Make no mistake, these landmark announcements would not have occurred had your Union not led from the front to highlight the crippling burden of DFV processes on the frontline and its broader impact on proactive policing, recruitment and historically high attrition rates. We’re grateful to the Queensland Government, particularly Minister Amanda Camm and Police Minister Dan Purdie, for acting on key elements of our blueprint, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration to deliver further results for our members.

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic & Family Violence Amanda Camm released a statement on April 4, 2025 “I want to acknowledge the advocacy from Queenslanders. We’ve had almost 50,000 Queenslanders sign a petition. I want to thank our frontline, hardworking police, the police union, the advocacy from victim survivors and those who work in the sector, who work tirelessly to

support and protect victims. This is about ensuring that police can get to the next victim, that they can put in place protection directions when the victim needs it, and that that accountability then falls squarely on the perpetrator in regards to them committing any other offence.

Police Minister Dan Purdie also said "That's why we've been listening to frontline police. We've been listening to the Queensland Police Union, particularly Shane Prior, who's been leading a campaign on this, and we're embarking on this overdue reform. This is critical, overdue and urgent reform we've known for a long time. The Queensland Police Union, our front line police, and even Police Commissioner Gollschewski, has raised publicly the urgent need for reform in this space.

FEDERAL ELECTION

We are approaching a general Federal election on Saturday May 3, 2025. I have been engaging with members of both the Government and the Opposition to secure commitments to strategies for attracting and retaining police officers.

We are all aware of the advantageous salary sacrifice conditions enjoyed by our colleagues in the health sector. These conditions were introduced due to a national shortage of nurses and other health professionals. Individuals who were training here and then seeking better-paying opportunities overseas. The government of the day responded, and a similar response is required today.

Police officers are leaving in droves. The private sector and other government roles offer attractive alternatives, with comparable pay, no shift work, and no risk of assault, being stabbed with a syringe, or being spat upon.

It is time for the Government to implement effective strategies for attracting and retaining officers.

Our defence force personnel receive comprehensive medical and dental care because they put their bodies on the line for their fellow Australians. Given the nature of modern policing, our officers are equally deserving of such benefits; all too often they pay the ultimate sacrifice for their fellow

Queenslanders. It is time for a "blue health card" to be introduced to protect and support police officers.

Governments must recognise if police officers are not adequately remunerated and if conditions are not improved, there will be a critical shortage. The public will still be able to dial 000, but they will have to hope someone answers. It is becoming increasingly likely that it will not be a police officer.



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**IT'S NEVER BEEN
AS DANGEROUS OR
AS BUSY BEING A
POLICE OFFICER IN
QUEENSLAND.
WE ARE WORKING
HARD TO TRY
TO MANAGE
UNWORKABLE DV
LAWS, WEATHER
EVENTS, AND TWO
POLICE SHOOTINGS
ON THE GOLD COAST
WITHIN A WEEK OF
EACH OTHER.**

The recent weather event highlighted that where every other Government Agency deemed it 'too dangerous' we were apparently superhuman, and continued to operate and do their work for them.

It is in the shadow of Police across the South East regularly turning up and putting their lives at risk, the Government announced its wage offer to police. To say it was embarrassing is being kind.

The Minister has now come out and said it was 'just a blanket, initial, state wage plan'. One wonders why we bothered to meet for the Services' initial offer when the wage plan had been communicated to the Queensland Council of Unions at least a week before.

If the Government really wanted to treat us with some respect, they could have formulated an offer specifically for us. The anger amongst police is palpable, it is not just the pittance on offer, but that a Government who have repeatedly stated that they are 'friends of police', would with a background of national police shortages, put forward such an inadequate offer.

We have seen police in other states engaging in industrial action, and if the Government doesn't show very quickly that their 'initial offer' is going to be substantially improved, we may be heading down the same path.

I note that police unions who have taken industrial action in other states have been successful in obtaining improved offers.

I hope that the initial offer from the Crisafulli Government is an aberration and that they are astute enough to realise that police deserve a fair wage rise, without the need for police to resort to industrial action and the bitter aftertaste that leaves for all.

DFV REFORM

Just under 50,000 Queenslanders supported our vision for DFV reform by signing the petition.

Make no mistake the current dysfunctional DV laws are the number one frustration for our members on the front line, they are very much linked to the number two issue facing police (vacancies). Members who still have years of policing ahead of them are choosing to leave the Service, rather than contend with the current DV red tape.

There are more than 30 former front line members who have resigned so far this year (not including those who have age or medically retired). That is a medium sized police station. This makes DV reform the number one industrial issue for the QPU.

Something needs to change. We think that our DV reform agenda, to treat DV as a crime from the very first incident, removes the need for a protection order with mandatory conditions. Making DV a crime everytime, effectively makes the mandatory protection order the default expectation in any relationship.

Statements made by the aggrieved at the time would be admissible in

determining the charge. This single change will see many thousands of hours of police and court time refocused on holding offenders to account, rather than doing excessive paperwork to put into play something that most would regard as a basic requirement of any relationship.

If you haven't already, I urge you to read the QPU DFV Blueprint, (it is printed in full in this edition of the QPU Journal) and continue to ask questions. If adopted, this would be a game changer for police, and victims in this state, both in giving members job variety and arresting the number of resignations.

GOLD COAST ROSTER REVIEW.

There are no doubt some issues with the new 'demand' roster. It seems that at times there is either a feast or a famine.

We seem to have shifted our focus on jobs, which is fine, but there appears to have been a complete disregard of the paperwork these jobs cause.

Smaller stations seem to be spare parts for the 'Patrol Group' regime, with teams so small that the same two officers constantly work together.

There is significant room for improvement. I thought the idea of a trial was to quickly fix issues that may arise. But there seems to be some degree of paralysis to change things that aren't working. If we aren't going to adjust the roster on the run, why have a trial?

250,000 KILOMETRE CARS.

We have a 100 day review into the QPS scratching their heads to try to work out how to make the front line feel valued. Here's dot point one, get rid of the cars that are well beyond their replacement schedule (from my observation, that's the majority of the fleet).

We have iLoads that were due for replacement at 100k doing two and a half times that, and they're still out there.... I'm no mechanic, but you don't need to swing a spanner to know that the more kilometres a

car does (and it would be fair to say police are hard on our vehicles) the more parts wear down. Sure they can be replaced but that takes the vehicle off the road for longer periods, let's face it, they're not replacing every part within the vehicle, so the quarter million iLoad is never going to perform as well when it comes to steering and braking.

I'm told there is a large backlog of new cars waiting to be fitted with radios and this is causing the delay. It wouldn't seem like rocket science to get more radio fitters to take care of the backload, or perhaps train up some local auto electricians in fitting the radios.

Our local auto electrician would be more interested in doing this than replacing headlight globes in the iLoad.

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BEC BRADLEY

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I REMAIN COMMITTED TO KEEPING THE MEMBERSHIP INFORMED ABOUT THE VACANCY RATES WITHIN THE FAR NORTH DISTRICT (FND).

Since my last Journal article, there have been some slight improvements. You may recall that FND had the unenviable honour of having the highest staffing vacancy rate (13.2%) when compared to any other District in the state. At the time of writing this article I can advise that the District no longer holds this dubious honour as our current rate sits at 9.6% whilst Mount Isa District sits at 11%.

As a side, when it comes to staffing rates, you've just got to love percentages! 9.6% seems so much more palatable than saying we are still carrying 85 vacancies.

That's 85 people not in seats to do the business of policing and keeping the community safe! For those still playing along at home, the number is 25 needed by Mount Isa District to address their 11% vacancy rate.

I happily give credit where credit is due and recognise all the hard work that has gone into securing 33 more police, albeit the majority are First Years, (that's 33 more since the December QPU Journal) for the District. On behalf of the frontline, I sincerely thank all those involved for their hard work that has made this possible.

33 more First Years, yeah great, that's just what we need! I hear you say.

At a recent meeting with AC Schafferius I was informed that AC Guteridge at PCAP has proposed changes to policy relating to First Year Constables (**FYCs**) and **Field Training Officer (FTO) supervision**

ratios. The long and short of what is intended is that instead of a 50% ratio, where an FYC has completed all 9 WPA's, the FYC is only required to work a minimum of 25% of their rostered shifts with an FTO. A small step I know but one that may slightly assist the current situation by affording more flexibility with rostering while continuing to maintain an appropriate level of supervision and guidance for the FYC.

During my next meeting with the AC I plan to propose that PACE officers be permitted to become FTOs immediately upon completing their training program. As re-joining officers, PACE officers bring prior experience to the table.

When confirmed as Constables, they are often awarded two stripes and become a senior officer within their teams. It makes sense, therefore, to allow them to fast-track to FTO status, taking advantage of their existing skills and experience. I raise this with the hope that the proposal will advance to AC Guteridge for consideration.

Members will have seen two emails from the Commissioner advertising the vacancies in FNR. The Commissioner encourages members to apply for positions within the Region without the need for Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) approval. The waiving of tenure for the purpose of taking up a position within FNR is also likely dependent upon where it is that you wish to transfer from. These emails highlight the allowances that are payable and detail the availability

of housing in FNR as attraction incentives.

I take some comfort in the perception that our voice has been heard by the executive of the organisation but wonder if we will attract sufficient numbers transferring to the Region without further incentives.

The sceptic in me thinks that the mere advertising of positions does little to fix the staffing problem. Bolstering staffing numbers, on paper, with the rapid increase of First Year Constables coming to the Region also seems like a false economy.

The Cairns Education and Training Office's (ETO), staffing predictions suggest that by October/November 2025, the Region could see more than 150 FYC's on the books, raising questions about how the Region will manage both operational demands and training needs.

Additionally, the OIC of Cairns ETO has warned that their own sections current staffing model can only accommodate around 75 FYC'S without compromising the training demand placed on the unit by the appointed officers within the District.

To put things into perspective, FNR is home to roughly 1100 sworn and unsworn personnel, all of whom rely on ETO to meet their training needs and obligations. Alarming, ETO hasn't seen a work unit sworn staffing increase in approximately 20 years. As it stands, the situation is unsustainable, and it's unclear which cohort will be most affected – Confirmed sworn officers already struggling with high demands or the new FYCS entering the service.

The question now is: as the pressure on ETO grows, who will bear the brunt of the strain on training and capability? Time will tell how the Region and PCAP navigates these challenges. The diversification of training locals for FYC'S and an offer of administrative support by the District to ETO appear to be genuine steps in the right direction.

NO DIRECTION – NO VERSION

I have recently been approached by members seeking advice on what to do when involved in a Departmental traffic crash, or when tasked to investigate one.

The Union's position is to always request a direction be given to answer questions. If there is no direction, then do not answer any questions or provide a version.

A traffic crash investigation is a criminal investigation, and anything said without a direction is admissible against you. I would hope that all supervisors tasked to attend and investigate have a copy of the direction and are forthcoming when one is requested.

A polite refusal is appropriate where no direction is given. This can also be done via email (where a written request is made for a version). The reply email can be as simple as "I decline to participate in any interview unless I am directed to do so."

This applies for all inquiries about any offence or any investigation a member may be involved in.

You may be asked to investigate other officers for either criminal or disciplinary matters. Where you have been detailed a disciplinary investigation, you are required by policy to give the direction. Obviously where you have a criminal investigation, you can't give a direction, but you should expect a refusal to answer questions.

The reason the Union encourages members to take this approach is to ensure their rights are properly protected. There will always be a temptation for members to answer questions and give an account of themselves. Whilst this is understandable, it is extremely dangerous. It is much better to let an investigation run its course, rather than risk filling any gaps in the prosecution case against you.

The direction is effectively a reminder of the Commissioner's

standing order which requires all QPS employees to answer questions put to them by officers conducting an administrative or discipline inquiry. The response, which should be read onto the record, is: I am aware of the Commissioner's standing direction which requires me to answer questions put to me by officers conducting a discipline or administrative investigation. I am aware I am bound by that direction and a breach is a serious discipline matter. I will not answer voluntarily but will do so under protest and duress.

Both the investigator and the member should record any interaction so that there can be no doubt about what has been said or not said.

Making recordings in the workplace can be a significant misconduct issue, if they are done covertly. Members should be very clear they are recording a conversation with a superior or an officer designated an investigation. Members are also allowed to have support people present for any interviews. This should be a QPU branch official.

Similarly, we should keep the same principles in mind when asked for a version at critical incidents.

The current process to obtain a version from an involved officer in a critical incident to be able to manage the scene and determine further risk to the public/police is a grey area. Keeping in mind that it is a requirement under the PSAA and Management Support Manual in the 'Office of Constable' and 'Standing Commissioners Direction' to provide a Public Safety Statement.

ESC has provided that for best practice, the provision of a direction by a supervisor, reminding the officer of the 'Standing Commissioners Direction', to obtain this statement. This is recorded and not provided to the IIG or placed into briefing documents, EBN, etc. This statement is given purely to enable a policing

response for community safety and situational awareness.

IIG will be provided a situational awareness briefing from an officer who is different to the supervisor who obtained the Public Safety Statement.

The QPU encourages officers involved in critical incidents to speak in the plural on radio calls etc. An example of this might be 'Police have shot a male person. QAS required urgently. Police are rendering first aid'. This is done in an attempt to avoid naming the officer who has used their firearm.

WOMENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Up until very recently, the QPU has been one of the few jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand without a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC).

I am thrilled to advise our membership that I am the chair of our newly formed QPU WAC. Acknowledging recommendations 7 & 8 of the Human Rights Commission "Strengthening the Service", this is just the beginning of the QPU's commitment to improving workplace equality.

With a formalised committee we hope to yield greater credibility and influence towards the QPS Executive. Although the committee does not have an independent vote on the QPU, as the chair I will bring forth issues raised by the WAC for discussion and consideration amongst the executive.

We aim to offer a stronger voice and representation for the women of QPS. Women make up 28.5% of the QPS sworn workforce, and it's time we were properly represented and supported by our union.

As the WAC develops, I also hope to see some positive changes by the QPU to represent and support the victims of discrimination, sexism and misogyny. The WAC will also work to increase union participation and visibility of women across the state, with a vision to have female delegates accessible for those

members who would prefer female support.

Keep an eye out in the very near future for more information on how the WAC may be able assist.

SPECIAL AWARDS PRESENTATION

I recently had the pleasure of attending a special awards presentation to honour and recognise members of the QPS and the community for their notable conduct during the events that took place at Cairns Central on Tuesday 16 February 2021.

Whilst performing official duties at Cairns Central Shopping Centre, Senior Constable Tim Liesegang sustained life-threatening injuries.

At around 2.15pm, Senior Constable Liesegang and Senior Constable Oliver Oldfield identified a known offender within Cairns Central. Both officers took immediate action to locate the offender with intent to take him into custody.

Upon observing the police, the offender attempted to evade the officers by running into the shopping centre's external carpark, before entering an internal maintenance services area.

Senior Constables' Liesegang and Oldfield separated to maximise their search capacity and commenced a coordinated approach to locate the offender.

After a short search, Senior Constable Liesegang located the offender in the stairwell of the maintenance corridor and informed him he was under arrest. The offender initially complied with lawful directions. However, without warning, the offender took physically combative actions to avoid arrest, severely injuring Senior Constable Liesegang. The offender subsequently escaped through the centre's carpark.

Despite his severe injuries, Senior Constable Liesegang broadcast an urgent radio transmission, requesting assistance, and detailing the

offender's description and direction of travel.



S/C Timothy Liesegang and family on receipt of the Qld Police Valour Medal and the Qld Police Blue Heart Medal.

A significant police response immediately followed, resulting in medical care to Senior Constable Liesegang and the subsequent arrest of the offender.

The awards presented highlighted the immediate response in providing life-saving care to Senior Constable Liesegang along with recognition for those who were instrumental in securing the scene and apprehending the offender.



Sergeant Oliver Oldfield's mum attended to receive his Commissioners Certificate of Notable Action with S/C Liesegang.



D/Sgt Barry Karamujic received an Assistant Commissioners Certificate for professional commitment to the Criminal Investigation.



Mr Alan Burt (Cairns Central maintenance) received a Commissioners Certificate for rendering vital first aid to S/C Liesegang.



S/C Naomi Allen Commissioners Certificate for Notable Action.

Until next time, please stay safe, look after yourselves and one another.



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AS I SETTLE INTO MY ROLE AS NORTH COAST REGIONAL EXECUTIVE, IT HAS BEEN HEARTENING TO RECEIVE POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE UNION'S NEW DIRECTION AND THE POSITIVE TRAJECTORY WE ARE ON, PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS WITHIN THE ORGANISATION.

I am genuinely excited to be part of a passionate organisation with a renewed enthusiasm for advocating for our members to achieve the best work standards for Police in the country.

This edition of the QPU journal marks the first in fifteen years without some wise words from Peter Thomas. For those who don't know Peter, he was the Northern Regional Executive for over fifteen years and a mentor who inspired me to become a branch official in 2018.

I have thanked Pete privately for his years of guidance, but I want to honour him further by adopting his old journal writing style of 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly' in this article. Thank you, Pete, for being a role model and mentor.

THE GOOD

In February 2025, I had the opportunity to get around the North Coast Region with the General President, Shane Prior. Starting in Bundaberg and wrapping up on the Sunshine Coast, I attended union meetings at five key locations with the General President. These visits were incredibly important, giving me a real sense of the unique challenges and needs across our region.

Meeting our members face-to-face allowed me to see firsthand the diverse issues they deal with and the strengths they bring to our union. Each location offered a different perspective, enriching my overall understanding of our union's landscape. These interactions

weren't just about discussing specific topics but about building relationships and fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

The tour highlighted the importance of being present and accessible to our members, reinforcing my commitment to transparent and responsive leadership.

It showed me the collective strength of our union and how crucial open communication is in addressing our members' concerns. Moving forward, this deeper understanding will guide my efforts to advocate effectively for our members and ensure that our union remains strong and cohesive.

I also recognise the need to conduct these visits more often to meet as many members as possible and better serve their needs.

Regular engagement will help us stay connected and responsive to the evolving challenges faced by our members. I'd like to thank the Branch Presidents throughout the North Coast Region, who every day are doing a fantastic job for the members, advocating for them and acting as a conduit between myself, the QPU, and District management.

THE BAD

During my Regional visit, I was shocked by the state of some of our police stations within the North Coast.

One station had to create a DV safe room by sacrificing their locker room. As a result, officers are now forced to change in the single toilet or shower,

with their lockers crammed into the already tight meal room. The meal room table had to be removed, turning any access to the kitchen into a conga line to avoid collisions.



The staff lockers lined up in the meal room at Bargara Station.

Another station is in even worse condition, with no functioning toilet at all, and the building literally falling apart around the two officers stationed there. This is unacceptable and highlights the dire need for immediate intervention.

Furthermore, the Redcliffe Police Station, despite its breathtaking views of Moreton Bay, is on the verge of collapse.

Built in 1983, this station is not only bursting at the seams but also crumbling as the brick facade requires constant patch-ups to keep it standing. The situation at Redcliffe is a stark reminder of the neglect our police infrastructure is suffering. I am



Redcliffe Station is in urgent need of expansion and infrastructure rebuild.

acutely aware of many more stations that are in dire need of renovation or demolition and will gladly take a call from the QPS ELT to provide my complete list.

It is imperative that the Queensland Police Service and the Government take immediate action to address these issues.

Our officers deserve to work in safe, functional environments that allow them to perform their duties effectively. The current state of these stations is a disservice to the dedicated men and women who serve our communities and undermines their ability to protect and support the community.

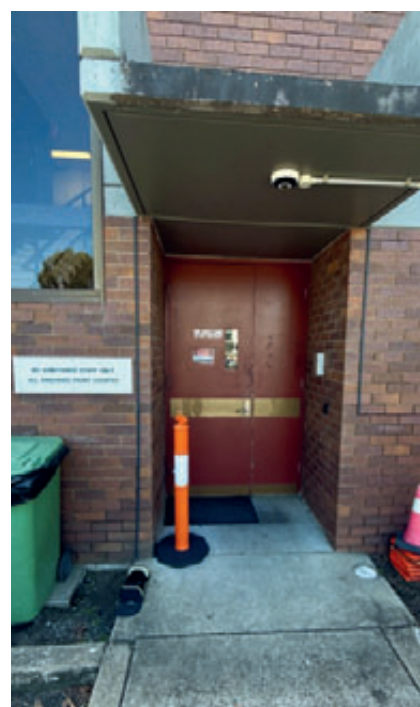
Maybe it is time to bring back 'Dump of the Month'.

THE DOWNRIGHT UGLY!

It has become apparent that the North Coast Region has the largest number of large to mid-sized watch houses around the state. From Pine Rivers Watch House to Bundaberg Watch House, the region has nine 24hr functioning watch houses, including Caboolture Youth facility.

The state of watch house prisoner transport vehicles in the North Coast Region is a glaring example of the Queensland Police Service overlooking critical safety concerns for both officers and prisoners.

I have received numerous complaints from officers over the last few



months, furious at the state of vehicles police are expected to transport prisoners in. These emails reveal the appalling condition of many vehicles within the Moreton District and the Sunshine Coast District, highlighting a pattern of neglect that cannot be ignored.

At the Caloundra Watch House, the situation is dire. The MG Excite hatch, transferred from Noosa PLO's, is unsuitable for prisoner transport and is only being used for tasks like collecting meals and medication. The Mercedes Sprinter, with over 620,000 km, has experienced multiple mechanical failures, including losing all electronics and brakes while transporting prisoners. This vehicle is

currently out of commission, causing significant operational disruptions.

Another vehicle, the Mercedes Brawler, broke down shortly after being loaned to Caboolture Watch House and remains unaccounted for.

The Maroochydore Watch House faces similar issues. The Mercedes Sprinter vehicles, with high mileage, suffer from continuous problems such as failing air conditioning, broken mirrors, and malfunctioning electronics. These issues have led to dangerous situations where prisoners had to be transferred under unsafe conditions.

Caboolture Watch House is not spared either. The Mercedes Sprinter, with over 500,000 km, frequently breaks down and leaks in the officer cab due to rust. Another vehicle, the Mercedes Brawler, has failed its Certificate of Insurance/inspection multiple times and lacks essential equipment like a radio.

The Pine Rivers Watch House also struggles with inadequate and unreliable vehicles. The electronic locking systems in newer Sprinter vehicles pose additional safety risks, as they require an officer to be in the front cab to open the rear prisoner pods, leading to instances where prisoners have escaped or jumped out of the cell to a welcoming committee of a single officer.

I wish I had something to write about the state of the Redcliffe Watch House

vehicles; however, they do not own any and rely on other watch houses for all of their transports.

The Queensland Police Service and the government must address these issues urgently. The current state of these vehicles not only endangers the safety of officers and prisoners but also hampers the efficiency of watch house operations.

This is a clear violation of workplace health and safety standards. Immediate action is required to replace these outdated and unsafe vehicles with reliable, modern transport options. The safety of our officers and the integrity of our police service depend on it.

Furthermore, the current practice of Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) leaving prisoners in police watch houses beyond court proceedings is unacceptable and a blatant abuse of their relationship with the QPS.

Watch houses are designed for short-term custody, not long-term detention. This misuse of facilities places undue strain on police officers, who are not equipped to handle extended prisoner care.

The Corrective Services Act 2006 clearly mandates that prisoners should be detained in corrective services facilities, with only rare exceptions. QCS's failure to promptly transfer prisoners to appropriate facilities is a serious safety concern

and a violation of workplace health standards.

I call on the QPS to take immediate action to protect watch house staff by ensuring prisoners are swiftly transferred to prisons. This neglect must end now to safeguard our officers and maintain the integrity of our police service. The time for decisive action is now.

FINAL WORD

As I travel the Region, I am meeting more and more people. If I haven't met you yet, I'm sure those I have met will tell you that I am friendly and approachable and want to help where I can to advocate for my members.

Please remember to reach out to your branch officials for your everyday questions. They are a fountain of knowledge and are likely to have an answer for you. If they cannot answer your question for any reason, please reach out to me. I am happy to assist members at any time, and if you need me, I'll be anywhere in the Region within a couple of hours (a little longer for Bundaberg, but not much).

Please remember, if you are asked to provide any version for a discipline matter, whether it's assessment enquiries, an email response, or a formal interview, it's OK to ask to speak to a union rep before speaking or providing a version. Stand up for your rights and ensure you are protected.



**THERE COULD BE A
CRITICAL INCIDENT AHEAD!**

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by immediately contacting the QPU office
Ph 3259 1900 (24 hours)
or your regional representative.
They will steer you in the right direction.**

QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION

www.qpu.asn.au



CLIFF BAIRD

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THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR EB 11 HAVE JUST BEGUN, GENERATING SIGNIFICANT ENERGY AROUND THE QPU LOG OF CLAIMS

I understand that members may feel frustrated by not having access to the log of claims due to the rules governing EB negotiations. However, everyone will receive this information in the coming weeks. It is essential to avoid believing rumours and to wait for the official announcement from the QPU Executive.

DV CAMPAIGN

During my travels around the Central Region, I have been discussing the 'Make DV a Crime Every Time' campaign and the importance of signing the QPU petition. It is crucial to capture the attention of the Crisafulli Government to initiate change in how we address domestic and family violence (DFV).

The petition attracted just under 50,000 signatures.



Jarek Reah & Ab Abigail Wainwright
Gladstone

There has been a significant amount of advertising on social media and various media outlets, and we have also placed bumper stickers throughout the Central Region to spread the message: "Sign the petition."

If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to read the QPU DFV



Jay Killen & Zoe Zerafa Longreach



Blueprint (it is printed in full in this edition of the QPU Journal.) and familiarise yourself with its listed priorities. There is so much positivity to come from this effort, especially for our frontline members.



Central Region Rep Cliff Baird discusses the QPU DFV Campaign with members



Central Region Rep Cliff Baird discusses EB issues with staff at Moranbah

WORKCOVER

As many of you know, I prioritise member welfare, which brings me to an important topic: WorkCover claims.

I often receive calls from members who, through no fault of their own, have had their WorkCover claims denied or resolved under the premise of Reasonable Management Practice.

If you have been injured at work or have taken time off due to a work-related incident and are considering starting a WorkCover claim, I strongly encourage you to call me or the QPU office 07 3259 1900 before proceeding.

The process of submitting a WorkCover claim can be daunting and confusing if you're unfamiliar

with it. I can refer you to one of our WorkCover lawyers from Sciacca's Law, who will provide you with advice and assistance regarding your claim.

Remember, you have only six (6) months from the date you see your doctor to commence a WorkCover claim.

There are **6** steps to follow:

Step 1:

Enter details of the event that caused your injury/illness on the Injury/ Incident Notification System.

Step 2:

Advise your Supervisor/OIC

Step 3:

Visit your doctor and request a 'WorkCover medical certificate.' This certificate differs from a standard

medical certificate for non-work-related injuries or illnesses, and it must include a diagnosis.

Step 4:

Contact me or the QPU office for a referral for you to speak with one of our WorkCover Lawyers.

Step 5:

Call WorkCover on 1300 362 128 to confirm your intention to proceed with your claim.

Step 6:

Liaise with Injury Management and WorkCover for your recovery and return to work.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

QPU – GET INVOLVED

Being an elected official for a local branch can be a rewarding opportunity to support your colleagues. This role serves as a vital connection between QPU members and the executive, as well as with our specialists in Industrial Relations,

Workplace Health and Safety, and Legal affairs.

With that in mind and the fact we have new members arriving in our region regularly, I would like to introduce our region's branches and their officials:

Branches	Sub-Branches
Mackay - A/President: Michael Thomson - Secretary: Hannah Beaumont - V/President: Vacant	Whitsundays - President: Luke Scells - Secretary: Shaun Myors - V/President: Liam Forster - V/Secretary: Tony Parkinson
Rockhampton - President: Damon Thompson - Secretary: Brodie Johnson - V/President: Bec Atkins	Sarina - President: Joe Murray - Secretary: Vacant - V/President: Vacant
Emerald - President: Jonathon Jude - Secretary: Daniel Laas - V/President: Vacant	Capricorn Coast - President: John Shanks - Secretary: Terry Selwood - V/President: Keenan Abdy
Longreach - A/President: Melissa Baird - Secretary: Paul Jackson - V/President: Vacant	Banana - President: Paul Chiles - Secretary: Vacant - V/President: Vacant
Gladstone - President: Chris Lindsay - Secretary: Vacant - V/President: Kieran Barton	Bowen - President: Craig McConnel - Secretary: Vacant - V/President: Jason Kreymborg

Congratulations to Rebecca Atkins from North Rockhampton on her election as Vice President of the Rockhampton Branch.



*Rebecca Atkins new Vice President
Rockhampton Branch*

If you would like more information on how to get involved, please contact me or speak with your local branch / sub-branch today.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY DOCUMENTS (PDSDS)

For those officers who have received a PDS, the process may be clear. However, for those unfamiliar with it, a PDS is typically issued when you are the target of a complaint.

This document is usually presented by a senior officer upon the direction of the District Officer. Importantly, at this stage, no final judgment has been made regarding the validity of the complaint, and an investigation will be carried out to determine whether there is enough evidence to support the allegations.

The main goal of a PDS is to ensure that the Queensland Police Service provides a safe and healthy work environment for all employees while also mitigating risks to the QPS, its members, and the community.

The strategies outlined in a PDS

aim to strike a balance between the responsibility of the QPS to address the complaint, maintaining a secure workplace, and allowing you to stay engaged in your role.

A PDS is a directive issued by a senior officer under the Police Service Administration Act 1990 and relevant Service Policy. Therefore, it is essential that you comply with the PDS you receive. According to S7.9, the PDS must be reasonable and not overly excessive. Measures such as mentoring or secondment should be tailored to the specific alleged conduct and not automatically set for the maximum duration of six months.

It's crucial to understand that a PDS cannot be wielded as a tool for punishment or to eliminate someone viewed as a problem.

Instead, PDSs should be appropriate and directly related to the alleged misconduct, maintaining a reasonable overall perspective.

Being termed a professional development strategy, the focus should be on fostering growth while effectively mitigating risks to the service.

Furthermore, S7.10 mandates that the Commissioner of Police must take the PDS into account when considering whether to initiate disciplinary action. This means that any PDS should not only include risk mitigation but also integrate developmental strategies.

The maximum duration for secondment, additional supervision, or mentoring is six months. I am available to review your PDS, and the QPU is prepared to challenge any PDS that appears excessive before the QIRC, as we are closely monitoring all such cases.

It's an honour to be your Central Region Representative, a responsibility not taken lightly. Please remember I am only a phone call away.



TONI BROSNAN

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE - NORTHERN REGION

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**FIRSTLY, I WOULD
LIKE TO THANK
PETER THOMAS
(THOMMO) FOR
HIS HARD WORK
AND COUNTLESS
HOURS AS THE QPU
NORTHERN REGIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE.**

Thommo has been a very active Union member since he was elected Branch President of the Townsville Branch in 2004 and then the Northern Regional Rep in 2011. Thommo has been to countless critical incidents, sat with members as they have farewelled loved ones and assisted members in personal matters.

Thommo has submitted his notification for aged retirement which will take effect in August 2025. Until then, Peter is accessing long service leave enjoying some well-deserved rest and spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

I wish Peter all the best for the future and hope that he enjoys it to the fullest with the travelling, car shows, time with family, gardening, car restorations and holidays, holidays and even more holidays..... I want to personally thank Thommo for his friendship, support and guidance over the years and hope that I can perform this role with the same passion and commitment he has shown in supporting our members during hard times both professionally and personally.

For those who don't know me, my name is Toni Brosnan. I have over 25 years in policing both in the Far Northern and Northern Regions starting my career in Innisfail as a General Duties officer. I transferred to Townsville CIB in 2004 and haven't left the District since.

From Townsville CIB, I moved across into Townsville Scenes of Crime in

2011 and I'm currently the Acting Officer in Charge of the section. I am the mother of two teenage children and a wife to a serving police officer.

Following Thommo's resignation from the QPU, I was appointed to fill the casual vacancy as the Northern Regional Representative.

I have been the President of the Mundingburra/Stuart branch for over 10 years and was awarded QPU Branch Official of the Year in 2024. I commenced this role at the end of January 2025, and I have certainly hit the ground running with my entry into the QPU Regional Rep role the same time as the 2025 floods impacting people across the far northern, northern and central regions.

The floods ravaged the northern region between January and February and are already being classed as one of the most significant natural disasters of the decade.

As relentless rain and storms battered the communities and rivers burst their banks, the QPS faced an unprecedented challenge, deploying officers across from across the state to manage the crisis, ensure public safety and provide emergency assistance.

We saw widespread devastation as communities were inundated, roads were submerged, home and businesses destroyed, and thousands were displaced. Police played a critical role in maintaining order, ensuring evacuations, and assisting in the disaster recovery. Local

police were the first line of defence and deployed to the most affected areas, often working in hazardous conditions to perform rescue operations, ensure the safety of the public and assist with evacuations guiding residents from flood-prone areas, helping them locate shelters and temporary accommodation. In some instances, officers had to navigate through rising waters in boats or through waist-high floods to reach isolated residents, often risking their own lives and safety to rescue those in need.

Given the scale of the disaster, police were required to manage with limited resources effectively. Many police were deployed from outside their usual Divisions and Regions, meaning policing in unaffected areas was temporality reduced.

This required complex coordination to ensure that response efforts were streamlined and that resources, including food, medical supplies, and staffing was allocated where it was needed most.

As the floodwaters began to subside, the role of police shifted from emergency response to managing the aftermath. Police were instrumental in securing disaster zones and working with other emergency services to conduct search and rescue operations, particularly in areas where people were still trapped

or where damage had compromised buildings.

The duties evolved into supporting the long-term rebuilding process, including assisting with the redistribution of aid and working to prevent crime in the aftermath.

The 2025 floods took a significant toll on residents, but it also left an indelible mark on the police officers involved. Many officers had personal connections to the areas affected, with some losing their own homes or seeing their neighbourhoods devastated. The emotional strain was palpable, as police had to balance their professional duties with their personal losses.

Despite these challenges, officers maintained dedication to their work, demonstrating resilience, compassion, and determination. The collective effort of Police during the floods highlighted the importance of community-orientated policing, where officers often go beyond the call of duty to support their community in times of need.

The 2025 January-February floods in the northern region stand as a stark reminder of the unpredictable nature of natural disasters and the vital role that Police play in managing such crises. From evacuation and rescue efforts to maintaining public order and supporting long-term recovery, the police were on the front lines,

ensuring the safety and well being of the public.

As the effected communities rebuild and recover, the work conducted by Police during the floods will be remembered not just for courage and professionalism, but for the unwavering commitment to public service in the face of one of the most challenging events the region has faced.

I look forward to the challenge this new position as Regional Representative - Northern Region presents, and I am committed to the work that is expected of me. I look forward to working with the branch officials throughout the Region and hope to set up some new cluster groups. I can be contacted on 0428 337 825 for union related matters.



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or your regional representative.

They will steer you in the right direction.



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION

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**IT NEVER CEASES
TO AMAZE ME, THE
FORETHOUGHT
AND DRIVE THAT
INDIVIDUALS HAVE
IN THIS CAREER
THAT CONTINUES
TO PROPEL THE
REPUTATION OF
POLICE FORWARD.**

After years of wandering into the Ipswich Highway Patrol Office, sheepishly glancing around the room whilst rolling my beaten hat between my hands attempting to catch the eyes of an unsuspecting Road Police Guru to offer me advice on vehicle related offences, I was privileged to be invited to an event initiated and orchestrated by Senior Constable Lyndon Anderson.

SC Anderson has been a long serving member of the Ipswich Highway Patrol, providing countless hours of advice to fellow officers and members of the public, something that he has now formalised in an effort to increase road safety within the District and beyond.

Lyndon became aware of a Learner Driver program being run at the Norwell Motor Complex in 2021 by Sgt Andrew Harper (Driver Training) before adapting the model and commencing it in the Ipswich District in 2023.



Lyndon advertises an invitation requesting learner drivers accompanied by a responsible adult to attend the Willowbank Raceway Complex in a vehicle they are comfortable driving. Approximately 130 learner drivers attended the January 2025 session, along with their responsible adult accompanying them.

Following a staff briefing, a learner/supervisor consult covering





participant expectations whilst on the racetrack is conducted. Lyndon presents a road safety seminar to widen their knowledge on being safe on the road, common offences and consequences of being involved in a serious traffic crash with real life stories to build authenticity.

Approximately four sessions a night at 45 minutes each are conducted where QPS, QFES and QAS conduct urgent duty driving around the learners whilst on the track in a safe

and efficient manner to prepare them for a real world experience.

During QPS intercepts of the learner drivers, Police engage and chat to them about their confidence, driving ability and answer any questions they may have.. Once the session is complete, drivers experience an RBT line with the learners as they exit the track.

Lyndon arranges for different representatives from agencies including TMR and Australian Road

Safe Foundation who conduct further hands-on seminars with the learners after their sessions about safe driving positions and capabilities of the vehicles.

***THIS FANTASTIC INITIATIVE
WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE
WITHOUT THE DEDICATION OF
SC ANDERSON, THE IPSWICH
DISTRICT HIGHWAY PATROL,
COUNTRY PATROL GROUP AND
THE IPSWICH TCS.***

QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION JOURNAL



SOUTH WEST DISTRICT – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Recently I was Lucky enough to attend the South West District International Women's Day "Women in Policing" awards ceremony held in Roma.

Hosted in the Roma Cultural Centre, the attendees were privileged to have a presentation conducted by Tonya Carew, a retired Superintendent of Police who guided the forum through the evolution of Women in the Queensland Police Service and the trials and tribulations they experienced during this time.

I was privileged to overview the applicants and hear some of the stories of their achievements along with the work that is conducted on a daily basis.

It goes without saying that these women, working in some of the most isolated and challenging communities in Queensland have not only taken 'the extraordinary' in their stride but have made it the norm.

Coming from a busy Regional Detective background and Metropolitan General Duties, I quickly became humbled by the level of tenacity, resilience and dedication,



recognising that no concessions were even considered. The following awards were presented on the day with each one having their own criteria required to be considered.

**Paving the Way Award -
Senior Constable Linette Swales**

**Excellence in Rural Policing Award -
PLO Robyn Jennings**

**Outstanding Female Administrator
Award - AO Lisa Whalan**

**Matthew Arnold Award -
Senior Constable Trent Parsons**

**Rachel McCrow Award -
Detective Senior Constable Trudy Stonier**

It was pleasing to see such a spread of policing disciplines and different personalities attend the ceremony that was arranged as the first event of its kind in the South West. It would be remiss of me to not thank SC Linette

Swales for her tireless effort to make this such an amazing day.

Our congratulations go to each and everyone of the well deserving officers and staff who continue to demonstrate qualities that I believe each and every one of us should strive to achieve.



Outdated Mindsets, Gender Discrimination and the Australian Human Rights Commission – a summertime dalliance undermining the fabric of our society

Picture this scenario:

You are in a relationship with your significant other and you have been married for a number of years. You have a respectable job yourself and your partner tells you one day “I want to be a Police Officer”.

Your partner has all the qualities required, they are authoritative, yet kind and compassionate. They are educated and have some life experience that would assist them in navigating the communities they desire to serve.

After the required training at the Academy your partner graduates knowing that their whole career waits for them. During their first year in service they arrive home at the completion of each shift, eagerly telling you of their experience during the day and how they are ahead in their required training and competencies, receiving positive remarks from their fellow officers.

Then comes the curveball. A pregnancy has developed. Your partner, now under further stress than at the beginning of her fledgling career grasps with the concept of retaining employment and having a family. As the partner, you comfort your wife and tell her it will be ok as surely ‘the boss’ will understand.

You wave goodbye late in the afternoon to your wife who is heading into the station where tragedy is hiding in the shadows around the corner. Unexpectedly, a personally traumatic experience without any warning has found your partner, resulting in hospitalisation and the theft of any happiness associated with the pregnancy.

Due to circumstances out of your combined control, your wife, the Police Officer, is now subject to limited ability to bear children. The treating doctor provides information that there is still hope, however it will require treatment and a successful pregnancy, ideally within the next year to overcome any long term fertility issues.

Your wife is a strong woman, she has risen to the occasion and overcome

challenges since you met. She tells you that because she is ahead in her training, she may be able to extend or defer for treatment options to be commenced whilst she accesses annual leave that she has accrued. You agree and the following morning you wave her goodbye once again, wishing her well with the discussions between her and ‘the boss’.

When you arrive home from work in the evening, your wife is already home with a distressed look on her face, her eyes empty as if she has had the vision of her future erased like a sweeping wave racing across the sand. You walk towards her as she mumbles “I was told I had to resign”.

This a true story from 2025.

ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE ALIEN TO SOME, I ASK OUR MANAGEMENT TO LOOK INWARDS AND REFLECT ON HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT YOUR OWN WIVES, DAUGHTERS, SISTERS AND FRIENDS IF YOU WERE IN THIS POSITION AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT?

**Sometimes our protectors
need protecting...**

**for a fair and
just outcome
become a
member**



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES
Telephone: 07 3259 1900 • Fax: 07 3259 1950





JOHN SHILTON

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE - HQ & SUPPORT REGION

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**IT WOULDN'T BE
A QUEENSLAND
SUMMER WITHOUT
MEMBERS FROM
HEADQUARTERS AND
SUPPORT REGION
BEING DEPLOYED
NORTH TO ASSIST
OUR BROTHERS AND
SISTERS IN BLUE AND
THE COMMUNITIES
WHERE THEY SERVE.**

This time around our members were deployed to Ayr, Cairns, Cardwell, Ingham, Innisfail, Mackay, Proserpine, Silkwood, Townsville & Tully. This is the largest number of deployments co-ordinated by the SPOC since the 2010-11 floods.

Members not only assisted with traffic management, logistics movement and evacuee relocation, they also covered general duties shifts to enable the local members to clean up their own homes damaged in the weather event.

Deployments conducted by Headquarters and Support Region members are as follows:

Commander of the SPOC Acting Superintendent Mark Bradford said "From my perspective as the SPOC commander, I would like to pass on my thanks to all those members who deployed, particularly those who we deployed at very short notice (i.e. the same day)."

STATE FLYING SQUAD, TASKFORCE GUARDIAN & OPERATION WHISKEY LEGION

On January 12th it was announced that the State Flying Squad would be increased in strength to 58 members. This more than triples the size of the squad from the current strength and increases the make up of the squad

Command	Squad	No Deployed	Total
OSC	Railway Squad	39	112
	PSRT	34	
	Water Police	16	
	Dog Squad	5	
	Forensic Services	4	
Road Policing	Task Force	14	14
DVFC		3	3
ESC		3	3
SCTC	Prepare Prevent	13	15
CIC	PSG	2	
	Guardian	6	37
	CASCG	5	
	OCGG	8	
	Stock Squad	5	
	Artemis	1	
	FCCG	4	
	Homicide	2	
	DSCG	4	
Command and Div Total			184

from 3 teams to 6 teams plus an intelligence team.

Although incorrectly promoted in the Ministerial media statement as a “new flying squad”, the ‘flyers’ have been around for many years. The squad is largely made up of Detectives and is regularly deployed locally and throughout the state to assist the regions, and support specialist squads with major and protracted investigations.

Most recently, the State Flying Squad has hosted Taskforce Guardian, which is a joint youth justice and QPS initiative targeting youth crime hot spots.

It has been announced that once the ‘flyers’ have reached full strength, it will absorb the responsibilities of Taskforce Guardian and Operation Whiskey Legion, which will allow seconded members to return to their substantive roles.

Filling 40 plus vacancies won’t be a quick process, but knowing that there is light at the end of the Operation Whiskey Legion tunnel will be a relief for the hundreds of members who have put their own priorities to the side to support the front line.

FOYER SECURITY UPGRADE

The process to increase the security of the foyer at Police Headquarters has finally started.

An external swipe panel has been added to the after-hours door to the left of the main entrance on Roma Street, and an exit button has been fitted to the inside of the main sliding glass entrance doors for after-hours exit.

A swipe panel has been added to the outside of the sliding glass doors leading from the foyer to the atrium, and an exit button has been fitted to the inside of those same doors for after-hours exit.

So here we are, months after my last journal article where I highlighted the grossly inadequate security measures in the Police Headquarters foyer,

and all that’s been done is to install a couple of swipes and exit buttons to improve security after hours. During business hours, the foyer of Police Headquarters it’s still a free-for-all. The cattle gates are still in the same position, with no screen installed above them to prevent the relatively easy access to the atrium, which in turn provides access to the lifts and fire stairs to all levels.

The area leading to QPS Media and the Police Museum is still unrestricted, and the stairs leading up to the level 1 offices of the Child Abuse and Sexual Crime Group are still accessible by anyone.

This is simply not good enough.

The level of security at Police Headquarters is significantly inferior to what you would encounter at most modern suburban Police Stations.

Granted, in a building that houses ten times the number of staff than a large station, easy entry and exit of those members is important, but so is the security and safety of those members. I’ve seen the proposed plans for foyer improvements. The size of the foyer needs to be reduced by bringing forward the cattle gates and closing off access to QPS Media and the Police Museum. Victoria Police Headquarters and South Australia Police Headquarters are both examples of getting building security right. Perhaps our leaders could take a leaf out of their books and strive to keep our people safe while they’re keeping other people safe.

Also worth mentioning is the Police Headquarters ‘Achilles Heel’ that is the entrance to the basement carpark, secured during business hours by an unarmed Protective Services Officer and a flimsy boom gate, but I’ll save that for another edition of the QPU Journal.

NEW BRANCH OFFICIALS

Since my last journal article, two of the branches in my region have welcomed a new team of Branch Officials.

Crime Ops Branch:

President: Bree Sonter
Vice President: Duncan Gorrie
Secretary: Simon Philips Assistant Secretary: Grant Linwood

Legal Services/Brisbane

Prosecutions:

President: Matt Bach
Vice President: Sanghyun Koh
Secretary: Lara Mills

Most of these branch officials have no formal union experience, and I congratulate them on taking the opportunity to work as an advocate for their colleagues and fellow branch members.

EB11 & OSA REVIEW

The QPU team has had the first meeting with the QPS to start EB11 negotiations.

The week before this meeting, the Government advised unions representing public servants that the wage case for all public servants would be 3%, 2.5%, and 2.5% over three-year agreements. This offer is unacceptable, and all unions present at the meeting agreed.

Now that EB11 discussions with the QPS have begun, confidentiality must be maintained, so there will be no further comments about EB outcomes until an agreement has been drafted.

This draft agreement will then be put to members for a vote, and if members are not satisfied with the agreement, they can reject it, and we will continue with negotiations.

QPU CONFERENCE 2025

The annual QPU Conference will be held in May this year. Motions for debate will be distributed to all QPU Branches prior to the conference. This will ensure that branch members are aware of what will be discussed at the conference, and they in turn can advise their cluster delegates how they would like them to vote.

If you want to have your say, make sure you get to your branch meeting. If you don’t know what branch you’re

part of, send me an email jshilton@qpu.asn.au and I'll respond.

QPU ASSISTANT TREASURER

At the February QPU Executive meeting, I was honoured to be elected to the position of joint Assistant Treasurer alongside my colleague Shayne Treasure from Metro South Region. We will maintain the high standard set by our former Treasurer and now Vice President Andy Williams, and will continue to safeguard our member's funds.

As always, I'm contactable on my QPU mobile 0437 194 837 and on my QPU email jshilton@qpu.asn.au. If you see me in Police Headquarters, feel free to stop or a chat.



QPU Assistant Treasurer John Shilton, QPU General President Shane Prior & QPU Assistant Treasurer Shayne Treasure.



THERE COULD BE A CRITICAL INCIDENT AHEAD!

If it happens, protect yourself and your family
by immediately contacting the QPU office
Ph 3259 1900 (24 hours)
or your regional representative.
They will steer you in the right direction.



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION

www.qpu.asn.au



RICHARD JACKWAY
REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE - METRO NORTH REGION
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**THE DEMAND
ROSTERING TRIAL
IN NORTH GATEWAY
HAS STARTED, AND
WHILE IT IS TOO
EARLY TO SAY IT
IS A SUCCESS, THE
MAJOR ASPECT OF IT,
PATTERN ROSTERING,
HAS OVERALL BEEN
WELL RECEIVED
BY GENERAL DUTY
CREWS.**

There is a distinct benefit to nine hour shifts, with a greater handover period that allows for more paperwork to be done, and the longer shifts resulting in two extra days off per month, which can only be beneficial given the rate of burnout on the frontline.

There have been some co-ordination issues, but the feedback I'm getting is that matters are being responded to, and rectified.

We still have to wait and see how this roster will go over the Easter / Anzac Day period. And projecting further ahead, how it gets adopted in other Patrol Groups of Units. One size will obviously not fit all.

HIDING PSYCHOLOGICAL STATISTICS

Transparency & Accountability – core principles of the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994

Yet the QPS is simply not open about the rate of psychological injury within the QPS, nor the amount of sick leave taken per person. Not only do they not publish this data if you ask for it, it is very difficult to obtain, due to how it's recorded.

As these two data points are vital to understanding the psychological welfare of its employees, and the psychological hazards they face, the lack of published or accessible data means no-one knows if the Service is meeting the WHS Act obligation.

So why does the QPS not publish psychological welfare statistics, why are these statistics not centralised, and why are they so difficult to obtain?

My view is the QPS must be terrified of being open about these statistics.

Yet such a fear reaction is entirely misplaced. It focuses on the short term, and fails to recognise the tremendous long-term benefit being open about the statistics will bring.

Surely being open about it will eventually result (in my view), in more boots staying on the ground through a healthier workforce.

By publishing data, three broad categories of things can occur that have long-term benefits:

1. The QPS can establish KPI's, and obtain user feedback.
2. The data can be analysed by third parties, it can be challenged, actual discussion can occur about systems
3. Continuous improvement can occur: capability gaps become identified, systems that don't work are removed, good systems are strengthened, etc

But as they hide the data - how does the QPS even know its systems work...so how do they know their welfare systems aren't broken? They must suspect their systems aren't working, otherwise why hide the data.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELFARE STRATEGIC PLAN

My view is the QPS could save hundreds of millions of dollars over a number of years by adopting a Psychological Welfare Strategic Plan to provide direction, strategies, KPI, and continuous growth.

Currently, there is no holistic approach to psychological health:

1. In the Welfare Systems space;
 - There's no system of confidential self-assessment
 - Members have no training to process in a healthy way the trauma & psychological abuses they face on a daily basis
 - There is little to no proactive systems
2. In the Organisational Justice space
 - There is no overarching psychological health framework
 - The Discipline System: many members have avoidable adverse psychological reactions to the discipline system - including during the service of PDSD's, during the notification of Discipline complaints, during
 - Inequities & unfairness in the development & appraisal space
 - Failure of Procedural Fairness during FWA negotiations, Corrective Conversations, DAP entries etc

3. Continuous Improvement

- As per my thoughts on the QPS publishing the data, there are massive long term benefits in publishing this data. The QPS needs to adopt accountable & continuous improvement

Proactive & Reactive Psychological welfare systems, and Organisational Justice and Continuous Improvement (or the lack of these systems) play massive parts in the welfare of our officers, but there is no leadership, no overarching framework, and no KPI's that the QPS can be held accountable to.

A Psychological Health Strategic Plan is needed to provide leadership & framework.

The QPS could save hundreds of millions of dollars over many years while significantly improving the welfare, health & safety of police officers.

This is my hope.



**Sometimes our protectors
need protecting...**

***for a fair and
just outcome
become a
member***



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES

Telephone: 07 3259 1900 • Fax: 07 3259 1950





SHAYNE TREASURE

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE - METRO SOUTH REGION

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**WE HAVE ALL SEEN
THE APPALLING
INITIAL WAGES
OFFER MADE BY
THE CRISAFULLI
GOVERNMENT.
INSULTING IS THE
MOST POLITE WAY OF
VIEWING THIS.**

Yes the government inherited debt, yes we have natural disasters and other impacts on government coffers but you were elected on a mandate of law and order. The fact that is not lost on Police.

Dear Government, you are now shackled to the fact you came to power on the back of crime. We, the primary functional arm of the State deserve and expect better.

Interstate colleagues facing the same challenges have achieved some decent wage increases in their attempt to stop the flow of resignations of mainly frontline Police from those agencies.

Sometimes wages are only part of the problem. I dare say from my water cooler surveys particularly amongst the NCO cadre that money does loom large but is only part of the problem.

The QPS seems to cling to processes that simply do not seem to work or achieve what they are touted to achieve. We see this in rostering and injury management processes. There may have been a good intention behind what's going on but rarely do these manifest to palatable outcomes.

The discipline system appears inconsistent and at times arbitrary in that in the absence of anything else you end up liable to enforced training because it's good for you and will make you a better Police Officer. What about a good old plain, you didn't do it, acquitted, yes a simple statement saying it never happened, no training required, no need to book

end the whole thing. Even better a written statement saying good job and nothing to see here, the current results leave a bad taste of ambiguity and online training.

The fact that rostering, managing the injured and discipline appear continually in concerns raised by members is astounding the QPS does not 'read the room' and show concern these systems are creating stressors amongst the ranks.

The promotional system is another aspect again that members have little faith in. I'm sorry but everything is not fine, people are not well, and a majority are disenchanted with the organisation. Many agree we are an organisation without a soul, the absence of that life spark and pride in being a Queensland cop is now a dying ember.

I see there is a review about what we do for other organisations but dare I say we may need a very critical introspective self-reflection on who we are, and what we are and why are we here in this situation.

We perch of the precipice of having a very, very junior General Duties workforce where turnover will sap experience and competent supervision with those remaining. Of course, the public will be the biggest losers if this occurs.

Somewhere I suppose is a project with a snazzy catchphrase expounding re-growth and healthy renewal backed with dazzling graphs as to savings on leave and WorkCover with a vibrant young workforce who

give us all they can in 5 to 7 years and then multi skill away.

Policing, Nursing, Teaching and Corrections require experienced frontline practitioners who can identify, and remedy situations based on experience before they get out of hand. The absence of frontline experience in all these professions leads to large scale organisational dramas.

I say to the Crisafulli Government, please consider our real worth. When the decisions you make do not sit well with the electorate and people become angry and upset it will then be you who will want engaged, experienced professional police with good morale and spirit.

To the QPS, its really crunch time to re-invent the methodology of management, not mantras, catchy statements and alike but address the perception amongst the ranks that to the Service, staff don't matter. The promotional and disciplinary systems are inconsistent and effect morale and retention. If everything is so good, why do staff feel like this,

why are resignations up, why is sick leave high and WorkCover numbers soaring?

THE DFV CAMPAIGN

Love it or hate it the QPU is having a go. Why? Because no one else is.

Commissioner Gollschewski admitted to getting nowhere with DFV reform at last year's QPU conference. I acknowledge the mixed responses from my membership area and raising concerns about the cost of the campaign.

As I said, we are having a crack to try and remedy some of the huge issues that have arisen from DV and the way it has changed the job. I appreciate all the feedback regardless of where it sits on the matter.

Stay Safe.



Without us, you're on your own

**When you need professional
help, advice or support
we're here for you.**



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES

Telephone: 07 3259 1900 • Fax: 07 3259 1950



Official Lawyers for the Queensland Police Union of Employees

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sciaccas.com.au



PAY OFFER RESPONSE

**THE QPU ENTERPRISE
BARGAINING
AGREEMENT #11
NEGOTIATING TEAM LED
BY GENERAL PRESIDENT
SHANE PRIOR PROVIDED
A RESPONSE ON
WEDNESDAY MARCH 26,
2025 TO THE INITIAL
PAY OFFER SUBMITTED
BY THE QPS ON BEHALF
OF THE QUEENSLAND
GOVERNMENT.**

The initial offer of a base salary increase of 3% year one and 2.5% for years two and three was deemed unacceptable and well below expectations of QPU members.

Police Minister Dan Purdie however in media statements published on Monday March 17, 2025 indicated that the initial offer was a starting point for negotiations. This position has delivered an expectation that there is an opportunity for expansion and flexibility with the Government offer.

The QPU will lodge a 'log of claims' during April.

The QPU Journal has included the negotiating team's response to the QPS for members to review.

**MEMBER FEEDBACK IS ENCOURAGED
AND CAN BE SUBMITTED AT
EB@QPU.ASN.AU**

Monday March 17, 2025 | The Courier-Mail

NEWS 13



The fatal crash on Manly Rd, Wakerley in 2022.

**Jailed
for crash
in which
son died**

Lowball pay cop out

Minister in damage control as police cite 'deep anger'

Hayden Johnson

Police Minister Dan Purdie is moving to quell anger within the Queensland Police Service over the government's pay rise plan, insisting it is just an "initial" offer.

The state government last week formally offered front-line public servants a 3 per cent wage increase this year and 2.5 per cent each year in 2027 and 2028.

Queensland Police Union President Shane Prior reacted to the offer and said it had cre-

ated "very deep anger and resentment" within the 13,300-member ranks.

He warned officers would quit if the offer wasn't improved.

Police Minister Dan Purdie on Sunday insisted the state's offer was "just a blanket, initial state wage plan".

"We haven't started negotiating with the Queensland Police at this point and we will do that in good faith," he said.

"As a former police officer I know what our police face every day out on the front line

and we want to give them the reward and send the message that we do value them and we'll be doing that when we negotiate in good faith with the union."

Mr Purdie would not say whether the offer would be improved but promised to back the state's law enforcement.

"That's the starting point, that's the announcement," he said. "We haven't started negotiating yet."

"I have a great relationship with the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland

Police Commissioned Officers Union and I talk to them about a lot of things, pretty much every day.

"When we get to the table we will be negotiating in good faith with those two unions and all unions involved."

Premier David Crisafulli has hitched his leadership to a reduction in crime victim numbers.

Officers from the State Flying Squad arrested 288 people, including five serious repeat youth offenders, in a "syn-

chronised crime crackdown"

on the Gold Coast and Cairns. "Our focus is creating a state where there are fewer victims and every day that remains our focus and we won't rest until there's fewer victims," he said.

"What we've seen over a long period of time in Queensland is growth in the number of victims and it's been on the back of weaker laws and on the back of fewer police."

"We are determined to turn that around by giving police the resources and the laws to do their job."

Debate about new city regulations

business developer is concerned



QPUE Response to EB Wage Offer

from

QPUE President Shane Prior

Introduction

As indicated at the previous Single Bargaining Unit meeting, as lead negotiator for the Queensland Police Union of Employees (QPUE), I now tender this expanded response to the Wage Offer made by the State Government and Queensland Police Service (QPS) on March 12, 2025.

The QPUE finds this offer unacceptable and well below the expectations of our membership.

The QPUE currently has just over 13,000 members, both sworn and non-sworn. A comprehensive survey of our membership, with over 5000 responses to our specific EB survey and many more via our dedicated EB email, reveals a very clear theme of members feeling under-valued and under-appreciated. Members are overworked with youth crime and domestic violence, they lack an adequate work/life balance and are impacted by cost of living pressures. As a consequence, the QPS has a crisis regarding the attraction and retention of quality officers.

It is also clear the QPS has anxiety around these issues, with a Commissioner's Directive for a 100-day review to support frontline police, improve organisational efficiency, and rebuild workforce morale. The QPS is at a crossroads in rebuilding and strengthening its workforce to effectively confront these issues. The EB process is integral to this rebuild and it is vital that the QPS, Government and Unions works towards a positive outcome.

If the State Government and QPS are serious about addressing these issues, they must significantly improve this offer and commit to addressing the other items in our Log of Claims.

Police Minister Dan Purdie has publicly acknowledged that the Government's three year pay offer of 3%, 2.5% and 2.5% is an "initial" offer and he expressed a willingness to continue negotiating in good faith with the Unions. Based on Minister Purdie's statement, the QPUE is prepared to table our Log of Claims at the next meeting of the Single Bargaining Unit so that all the parties can get started with these important negotiations.

It is also the considered position of the QPUE that the cost of any additional entitlements negotiated by the parties should be met solely by the State Government. There are serious concerns that if the QPS budget is adversely impacted by an improved EB outcome, this will only exacerbate the existing issues affecting our members.

I will now provide some detail about the serious issues facing the QPS and QPUE members in support of our claim for a better wage offer.

Key Issues

Workload

The first key issue relates to workload. Police have an excellent reputation for doing what is required whenever they are needed to keep Queenslanders safe.

However, members currently face significant 'Law and Order' issues, including youth crime, domestic violence, drug related crime and organised crime. In addition to this, Police are always the first responders during times of crisis, such as the recent Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Member response to this natural disaster exemplifies the dedication of Queensland Police, who respond at all hours, face danger, save lives, and rebuild communities.

Police are more than prepared to do all of this if they feel valued and appropriately paid – however an inadequate EB outcome will have a negative impact on their enthusiasm and long-term retention.

Attraction and Retention

This brings us to the second key issue – attraction and retention of police officers within the QPS. Governments have committed to growing the QPS workforce since 2013, with current commitments standing at an additional 3050 officers above 2013 staffing levels. Whilst Academy acceptances are at record levels, it is vital to ensure the ongoing attraction of suitable employees.

Of particular concern is that attrition rates are also at record levels, doubling from 2.7% in 2013 to 5.6% (683 separations) in 2024. QPUE membership data indicates the majority are resignations (400) and medical retirements (83), with significant exits at the Constable (134) and Senior Constable (275) ranks.

The QPS vacancy rate in December 2024 was 7% (932 vacant positions), up from 5.6% (724 vacant positions) at the start of 2024. It is imperative that we reverse this attrition trend and this EB is fundamental to doing that.

It is not just QPUE data that has identified this issue. The member responses to the *Working for Queensland* results from 2023 also indicate continued high levels of attrition. Specifically, only 42% of QPS respondents would recommend their organisation as a great place to work, compared to 60% of Whole of Government respondents.

Of even greater concern is that 13% of QPS respondents want to leave their position as soon as possible and 17% within the next 12 months, compared to 9% and 16% of Whole of Government respondents, respectively.

When asked about the "Top Reasons for Leaving", QPS respondents indicated poor quality of senior leadership (33%), emotional exhaustion (24%), and dissatisfaction with work (20%).

This compares to Whole of Government results where poor quality of senior leadership was significantly lower (24%) and the next highest reasons were lack of future career opportunities (21%), and desire to further skills in another areas (18%).

Work/Life Balance

The third key issue impacting police is the lack of work/life balance, primarily as a consequence of the current rostering practices. Recent decisions to revert from 9-hour to 8-hour rosters to cover vacancies will likely lead to further exits from the QPS. Only 61% of QPS recipients indicate their workplace has the flexibility to manage work/life balance, compared to 75% of Whole of Government employees. Our Log of Claims seeks to address this issue and we look forward to positive discussions and outcomes on this topic.

Interstate Comparisons

A fourth relevant factor in this EB is the recent wage increases for other Australian jurisdictions, particularly in NSW and Victoria. The benefits offered by interstate jurisdictions have created expectations among Queensland police who are now openly comparing the benefits of transferring their skills elsewhere. Historically, Queensland has targeted re-joiners from interstate due to our competitive wage rates, however we now face an exodus of experienced police.

The NSW EB deal is 19% over 4 years, plus a \$5400 Leadership Retention Payment and a major restructure of paypoints that delivers additional base pay increases to some members.

The proposed Victorian deal is 4.5% per annum, plus an additional 0.5% 'Operational Readiness Allowance' for General Duties officers plus other additional benefits.

These increases have left Queensland Police wages seriously below interstate comparisons. For example, the Queensland Constable starting wage is now the second lowest in Australia at \$72,322 per annum (TASPOL \$71,377). By comparison, other Constable starting wages are as follows:

State	Wage Increase	Starting Wage
NSW	19% (2028)	\$83,028
VIC	20% (2028)	\$97,338
SA	8% (2026)	\$86,126
WA	12.75% (2027)	\$94,651
NT	9% (2025)	\$82,143
TAS	9.5% (2025)	\$71,377
National Average		\$85,777

The current Government offer would see the QPS Constable 1 receive \$78,262.80 in 2027 - well below interstate counterparts.

Conclusion

We are all aware of the 'Law and Order' commitments of the State Government and the QPUE supports the fundamental elements of that platform. However, for those objectives to be met, the QPS needs a workforce that is motivated, properly resourced, fully staffed and equipped with the necessary skills.

This round of EB is of utmost importance in making this objective a reality. Whilst wage outcomes are crucial, a broad range of issues contained in our Log of Claims also need to be addressed. We are at a critical time in our organisational history and this EB is perfectly timed for the Government to genuinely address the concerns of QPUE members and ensure that the QPS is an employer of choice.

We have a great opportunity to ensure that Queensland Police feel valued, supported, and ready to implement the Government's 'Law and Order' vision.

WATCHHOUSES ARE NOT PRISON DAYCARE

**THE QUEENSLAND
POLICE UNION (QPU)
HAS VOICED SERIOUS
CONCERNS REGARDING
THE INAPPROPRIATE
USE OF POLICE
WATCHHOUSES FOR
HOUSING CORRECTIVE
SERVICES PRISONERS.**

In formal correspondence sent to the Commissioner of Police and State Custody, the Union highlighted the strain this practice places on police resources and personnel.

Police watchhouses are designed for short-term detention, primarily for processing arrestees and managing bail. According to the Corrective Services Act 2006, individuals sentenced to imprisonment should be held in corrective services facilities. An exception exists for sentences of 21 days or less, permitting detention in a police watchhouse. However, for longer sentences,

detention is permissible only until the prisoner can be expediently transferred to a correctional centre.

The Act's explanatory notes clarify that exceptions are meant for unique situations, such as maintaining a prisoner's connection to a remote community or facilitating court appearances in regional areas. However, Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) has been routinely transferring prisoners to police watchhouses, burdening police officers with responsibilities meant for corrective services personnel.



Mt Isa Watchhouse.

QCS appears to be leveraging Section 269 of the Act, which allows the Police Commissioner to assist the QCS Chief Executive in emergencies. However, the QPU argues that this section is being misapplied to cover systemic staffing issues rather than genuine emergencies.

The legislative history of section 269, including the repeal of section 268 and the introduction of Division 3 in Chapter 6, Part 2 of the Act, reinforces this interpretation. The current legislative framework, while retaining the power to authorise police officers to exercise corrective services powers in emergencies, does not compel the Police Commissioner to provide police officers outside of those exceptional circumstances.

Therefore, it is abundantly clear the application of section 269 is strictly limited to instances of emergency or other extraordinary conditions where the QCS Chief Executive is unable to fulfil his or her statutory obligations due to factors beyond his or her control. It is not intended to address deficiencies in QCS staffing or accommodation.

This practice has led to significant strain on police officers, contributing to fatigue and burnout. The Queensland Government's recent inquiry into "gap creep" in police responsibilities underscores the severity of the issue.



The prisoner exercise yard at Cairns Watchhouse.

On March 10, 2025, Townsville Watchhouse was notified of the transfer of prisoners from Lotus Glen Correctional Facility for court sentencing. Anticipating an extended stay, the Watchhouse objected, prompting QCS to redirect the prisoners to a QCS facility, demonstrating that QCS can manage without police assistance.

The QPU fully supports its members and encourages other major centres to adopt a similar stance. The Union has called on the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to decline further QCS requests for extended detention of prisoners in police watchhouses, except under the specific exceptional circumstances outlined in the Act.

Shane Prior, the Queensland Police Union President, expressed

his frustration, stating, **"Watch houses are not prison daycare centres. This is a farce and something needs to change."**

He emphasized the risks posed to police officers, saying, "Police are being placed at significant risk due to the overcrowding that's currently plaguing our watch houses."

Mr Prior also highlighted the systemic issues, noting, **"This comes down to Queensland Corrective Services simply not doing their job and picking up their prisoners. We have ridiculous situations where a prisoner who should be locked up in a watch house simply can't because of the overcrowding."**

The Union is exploring all legal and industrial avenues to resolve this issue satisfactorily.



QPU President Shane Prior led a review on behalf of the Union of every QPS Watchhouse in Queensland.

DEPUTY DISASTER TAKES A CURVEBALL FOR COMMISSIONER

**IT WAS A PHONE CALL
THAT LEFT HIM NUMB,
POLICE COMMISSIONER
STEVE GOLLSCHESKI
ASKING HIS VALUED
STATE DISASTER CO-
ORDINATOR IF HE'D
ACCEPT A CURVEBALL
AND TAKE ON THE TOP
JOB IN THE QPS WHILE
HE TOOK EXTENDED
LEAVE TO BEGIN CANCER
TREATMENT.**

For Deputy Commissioner Shane Chelepy there was no hesitation in his response, he accepted the offer and within a few hours on March 1, 2025 he was active in the role of Acting Commissioner “Steve and I go way back to when we were Senior Constables together at the Valley, that’s how long we’ve known each other. I was concerned for him as an individual, I didn’t know what to say to him when he told me he was sick and it took me a while to comprehend.”

The fifty nine year old married father of two with a trademark flat top haircut has a reputation for being intense when it comes to work. He’s aware that image can be viewed differently by peers and junior police but there’s no apology, it’s how he operates and achieves results “when you are dealing with things to protect the community you have to deal with compressed time frames. I am trying to keep that tempo of delivery of change within the organisation.”



Acting Commissioner Chelepy admits he's no politician and there's a few rough edges, including being stood down when he was a Senior Constable but the anxiety that situation created has given him an insight into the deficiencies in the discipline system and it's something he'd like to try and correct while he's leading the Service.

There's a number of things on his 'to do' job list, including DFV reform, making the role for frontline police more enticing to stay, increasing opportunities for officers to conduct proactive patrolling and negotiating the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. All things he wants to achieve before Steve Gollschewski returns.

Asked if the sudden transfer of power has caused a paralysis of decision making across the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Acting Commissioner Chelepy said "I was able to bring the ELT together very quickly. In fact, what this incident has done with Steve stepping down so quickly, it's made the ELT band together with a bit more focus on the important things. It's unified the team a bit." He's also peering over desks while the 100 day review team conduct their assessment and for the first time we get a glimpse on some of the issues that he wants prioritised and what he believes will be non-negotiable.



The interview was conducted in the Level 7 office at Police Headquarters reserved for the Police Commissioner, an area Mr Chelepy says he's 'just keeping warm'. The QPU Journal has included the transcript of the interview for members to review. With no date on a potential return to duty for Commissioner Gollschewski the answers from Acting Commissioner Chelepy provide an insight to his plans and direction during his opportunity leading the QPS.



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION - INTERVIEW OF ACTING COMMISSIONER SHANE CHELEPY

Monday 14th April 2025

QPU: Briefly what is the Shane Chelepy police story?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I'll give you my highlights. So Specialist Services, Water Police, Specialist Services Group, Specialist Services Branch, District Officer Coomera, District Officer South Brisbane, AC Command, Ops Support Command, Organisational Capability Command, AC Southern Region, South Eastern Region, and then permanent Deputy Disasters. I've done Disasters as part of Op Support Command for well over a decade now. So, probably, I would argue that I've got a blend of being a DO, Specialist Services. So, early career Specialist Services up to Superintendent, then a blend of commands of regions.

QPU: What was that phone call like from Commissioner Gollschewski asking you to step into the role of Acting Commissioner?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I was shocked, like everyone else. In the last decade or so, we worked really closely together in the Disaster Management space. I was fortunate that I worked with him, I knew what his priorities are. They are our leadership priorities of the organisation. So I got told by him on I think it was a Friday, that I was going to be relieving as of then, but then I went straight into delivering a cyclone response. So, probably that bit of natural delivery helped me a little bit because it bought me into an area that I was comfortable in delivering in and gave me time to think about the role I was coming into.

QPU: Will the QPS and this office be different when Commissioner Gollschewski returns?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I'm hoping that when he returns he will walk back in and see that we have continued to deliver on what he was hoping to achieve, but rapidly. I'll be honest, I'm trying to drive those changes that Steve was trying to drive, but I am trying to get them in as quickly as possible. I am hoping that when he walks back in the door what he will see is the organisation has not lost its tempo on what we were trying to achieve.

QPU: Every police station you walk into in this state the first thing everyone complains about is the workload around DFV. What are you doing for the frontline?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: So, one thing I have done is I have continued what Steve was doing, and that was getting around and talking to staff. So I made a point now, I have now been in the job since 1st March and I have made sure that I have now visited at least more than a dozen police stations in that time.

You are right, I walk in, I ask the staff, "What do you want to talk to the Commissioner about?" And DV comes up every time. But I think the staff are pretty balanced. I have not had one sworn officer say to me that, "We should not be attending domestic and family violence." So I think the staff have got the community safety balance right. You know, they know they should be there.



Then, there's two elements of it; they want to hear what we are doing to address the changes in DV with government, and then there's some stuff in there that I hear from them that this organisation has actually got control over.

I'll give you the example: so, as you know, we've lobbied government, we've worked with government around some changes that have been recently announced; so, the Police Protection Direction, (PPD); the electronic monitoring of GPS trackers; and the video recording of evidence.

I think they are three really important changes that start us on the journey around domestic and family violence reform, particularly the PPD, because what we are looking at there is probably around about 70% of domestic and family violence jobs that our crews attend that a PPD will be able to be issued.

Now, when you look at the amount of jobs we're attending, the fact that it takes 4 to 6 hours to do each of those jobs, if we can bring that paperwork down to whatever it is going to take to do a PPD, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, whatever it is, that is considerable to the frontline. So there's that.

Then there's the evidence in chief trial of video recording of evidence. Again, if we can get to that, that will reduce the amount of time our staff are having to do.

Then we will have an election commitment from government that I have got to look at, which is to continue to drive efficiencies in DFV. And that will be over the term of government. We will continue to look at that.

But what I hear from the staff when I go into the stations is there is some stuff we have got control of that we have done to ourselves. I'll give you the example: no DV. We go to a domestic and family violence job, and then the staff are telling me they need to come back to a station and take over an hour to write off a no DV.

Now, there's no legislation that requires that. We can look at that internally. I've already tasked the DFV Command to look at person centric reviews. I have already asked them to have a look at DV other. I have already asked them to have a look at no DV jobs. I have already right from the beginning, like when a call comes in, how are our call takers coding DV's, no DVs and why is that occurring? What can we change there?

When our crews attend the job, how are they getting the approval to write off as a no DV? Then they have got to go back to a station and write it off as a no DV. I want to understand why. And that's what the AC is doing for me right now.

I think at the back end of what we've got control of we can do better.



QPU: So that sounds like you want to empower sergeants but also you are going to look at comms triaging.

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: 100 per cent. We've got to make sure that when a call comes in that we are giving it the right coding. So can we triage it there right before the crews even get it? Making sure we get the call right. Empowering our staff to get the call right. Then empowering our sergeants to make decisions, but getting it right.

I am going to follow on on what Steve Gollschewski said, you know, "Understand your left and right of arc, operate within the legislation, the policy, do a great job, operate for the best intent. And if you get it wrong, we'll back you. If you intentionally, go outside of those parameters, you are on your own." I think everyone accepts that. If you are operating with the best intent, we'll back you, 100 per cent.



QPU: Has this become a symptom of QPS middle management becoming too risk averse?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I think we haven't changed with the times. I'm not sure if it has become too risk averse, or we haven't changed our risk tolerance as we've improved our staff.

I'll give you the example: prior to DV Commission of Inquiry we had a process and then during Commission of Inquiry we added to a process to write off a no DV, but since then we've rolled out training to every staff member, right across the state.

Specialist DV training is now part of what we do. We've improved our practices, our procedures. We've improved all that. But we haven't gone back and re-visited whether or not we still needed the procedures that were in place during or prior COI DV. Even though we have lifted our staff knowledge, we've lifted our staff skills and ability, we haven't then re-visited the compliance regime that was before it.

So I don't know whether it is because middle management hasn't re-adjusted its risk tolerance. I'm saying "Give me the evidence." I'm saying to the AC of DV Command, "Go back and have a look at person centric reviews. How many have we done? What was the error rate? And is our risk tolerance still appropriate to the error rate?" And I'll guarantee you it is not.

QPU: Enterprise Bargaining Agreement #11 has now fallen into your list of things to manage. What is your insight?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: When I go around the stations, I think the biggest thing around EB is getting the balance between community safety. So as a Commissioner, I'll say this to the staff, "I've got an obligation to try and get as many staff on the road to support community safety. But that's not my only obligation. My second obligation is making sure that the staff are looked after, that they are not getting burnt out, their welfare is taken care of, injury management practices are in place."

I'll let the EB team work with the staff on that, but at the highest level as the Acting Commissioner, I've got to get the balance between staff welfare and looking after staff support, and delivering services to the community. I think if we go one way, or the other, the balance gets out of whack.

QPU: You talk about that staff welfare and balance but can cash make that feel better?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: Well, depends who you speak to. Some staff say to me, "It is not about the money." It is about feeling supported, being looked after. Obviously, people might see a monetary gain, but all the research shows that for staff to feel valued, to be looked

after, to be trusted, to be empowered is a better game than cash. Cash might give you a very short term sugar hit, but I think if you are turning up to work every day and nothing has changed, that sugar hit will disappear pretty quickly.

I don't think EB is always about cash. I think people get it wrong. There's a cash element to it, but it is also about what makes you tick.

The 100 Day Review to me is really important. There's two principles that I have absolutely reinforced into the 100 Day Review: one is that we have got to get our services as close as possible to the frontline. I'll use an example of injury management services, but there's lots of services, HR, Finance, Corporate Services, Specialist Support.

But if you think about injury management, our District Officers have to be empowered that their Injury Management Support teams are in the districts working with them, working with the leaders, working with the LICs to be able to get the right solution for the staff members on the ground. That, to me, is absolutely critical.

But the other important one, is to get the decision making back as close to frontline as possible. If we can re-empower our Sergeants, our Senior Sergeants to make decisions, good decisions, and back them on those decisions, as close as possible to the frontline, I reckon that makes a difference.

Now, when you go to getting that balance right, between serving the community and looking after our staff, I think it is those things. Yes, there's about percentage of pay increase, but I think there's those things about making you feel empowered to make your decisions, making sure you have got the decision making authority, making sure you have got the resources to do your job, making sure you have got the resources to support you in those enablement functions. All of that makes your job better as well.



QPU: How do you keep these police that have got over 7 years, maybe 10, 20 year's experience satisfied and ready to turn up every day?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: Well there's not one thing. It is all these little things we do right will keep retention. PPDs will help retention. As soon as you can stop that burnout focus on DV every shift. We know we have got a lot of DV every day. So if you can simplify those procedures.

Video recording of evidence. The way we write off a no DV. If you can start streamlining that bureaucracy that sits there and turning that back to other functions that the police can do. We've got road safety functions. We've got crime functions. Police enjoy doing those things.

So we've got to make sure we have got the balance right with the work they do, then we've got to make sure that we have got our policy, procedures, support mechanisms right to support them doing that work, then we've got to make sure we've got the back of the house focusing on the frontline.

Now, all those little things we do, whether it be one delegation change allowing the frontline to make a decision, whether it be one little support service we have put out there, all of those things will add up to attraction retention.

QPU: We've created probably the best recruiting pipeline in the country at the moment. And with that has come some bonuses to get people across the line. Those police who have been around for a long time now say, "Well, I didn't get cash. I don't get that sort of bonus." How do you make them feel better about turning up or value their service?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I think it is all those little things we've got to do to make sure that the coppers, when they turn up every day, they turn up in their best to give their best. It is as simple as that.

Yep, we can look and say, "We've created this pipeline now." But I think when I joined back in '86 there was a big recruitment pipeline then leading into Expo 88. You know, it was a job that I wanted to join. I hate living in the past, but there's all different times of our organisation where there was probably different recruitment approaches.

I don't think you can say, "Well, I joined 20 years ago, I should get what they get now." I don't think it is just about cash, I think it is about the environment.

When I have been going around the stations, they have been saying to me, "We want the best equipment, we want to be supported in what we do, we want to be freed up from DV." All those little things will make a difference, but I think the big difference for those coppers who have been around for a while is let's actually respect their experience, let's allow them to make decisions that understand what's necessary.



QPU: Police aren't the only ones going for an EB at the moment, there's nurses, teachers and other Unions, how do we make police more valued in Treasury than those other professions?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: Well, to be honest I don't think it is a competition. Nurses are very good at doing what they do in their profession. Teachers are really good at what they do in their profession. And police are very good at what we do in our profession.

I think it is not necessarily valuing police over the top of nurses, or teachers. We are all frontline service delivery areas and we all have an important role to play in community. I think it is more about us focusing with government about the value that police do. We see that every single day in what police do, whether it be in emergencies, whether it be in our day to day service delivery. It is what we do in DV reform. I think that's why we got the government support like we did in PPDs because they recognise that we got to free up our police.

I think it is overarching, it is valuing frontline service delivery to our community. That's where I see it.



QPU: What do you want out of the 100 day review apart from services closer to the frontline?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: There's a clear terms of reference about the 100 Day Review and privatisation of policing services isn't one of them. There is a clear government election commitment that the government have said they won't privatise the policing services. That's in the government election commitment.

The 100 Day Review states that section 2.3 of the Police Service Administration Act. So the team have been asked to engage right through to the frontline to identify those things that we don't believe we should be doing.

Now, I'll tell you some of the stuff we've already heard. We've already heard things like custody, prisoner transports, hospital guards, court orderly functions. We've already heard some of these things from the frontline that we don't believe that we should be doing.

Then there's other areas that we're saying, maybe we have been stretched beyond what we should be doing. So the 100 Day Review team has openly asked the frontline, our District Officers. They have engaged with all levels of management to say, "What is it that we currently do under our functions of the service? And what shouldn't we be doing?"

So, if you start with what services do you deliver to the community, the next step from that is what resources and everything on the frontline do we need to deliver? Next step from that is what services do we need to support our frontline to deliver on? That's what the 100 Day Review is about and align our processes.

It is not about changing the way services are delivered out of a police station. I believe the frontline already do a great job. This 100 Day Review is about what services the frontline deliver and how we support and enable the frontline. It is not about changing frontline service delivery at all.

QPU: You're quite happy to stand firm on that and say, "No, hospital guards and prisoner transports for instance are no longer a function of us"?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: We have looked at this before and it's just hit the too hard basket. The reality of it is someone has to deliver it.

What we have to work out, under the 100 Day Review, should it be us? That's the question. Should it be police doing that? Should it be an alternate service delivery model? Should it be Health? Should it be whoever? Someone has to deliver it.

Every day we see prisoners in our watch houses who have come there for court and then decide the video conferencing from our watch houses for court. You know, my question is should we be picking that prisoner up and transporting them to our watch house? Should we be holding them in our watch house?



The 100 Day Review team, I'm not going to pre-empt what they are going to come up with but these are things we've got to look at. That is not about me saying "We're not going to do it from this day forward." I then have to work with government and I have to work with the other agencies to work out where it is best delivered. If these were easy decisions, we would have already made them.

QPU: Are you prepared to be forceful and say that is no longer a police function?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I'll represent the organisation forcefully on that. There's no question about that. But, I need the team to give the evidence. Just like I ask Constables to turn up to court with evidence. I am going to be asking the Review Team to do the same.



QPU: You have had your own experience with the police discipline system and know the heartache and anxiety it can cause. What's your view on police discipline at the moment?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I am going to start at the top, if police do the right thing, and honestly go out there and do the right thing, we should back them. If police intentionally go out and operate outside of the law, I am sorry, but you should be on your own, because

you have made a conscious decision to undertake some criminal behaviour or whatever.

Then when we do enter the discipline system, we know the discipline system needs reform. When I see officers stood down, suspended for particularly long periods of time while investigations are undertaken and then, at the end of it, either be cleared or have their stand down revoked, I know from personal experience. I'll sit here and say I am a Commissioner that was stood down in my young days as a Senior Connie, and it has a profound impact on you.

Now, the fact of it is I haven't forgotten that. I still think our system doesn't support our approach. Too much I think our discipline system has been used for the wrong purpose. I think it is because our HR practices aren't modern. We've got to manage our workforce through modern HR and IR practices and keep stuff out of the discipline system that shouldn't be in there.

Then we have got to go to the discipline system and we have got to have a discipline system that balances when we get it wrong. I don't think you can have a workforce that is so scared of making one simple mistake that it is going to be punish on the back end of that. So we've got to support our workforce.

Then there's some stuff at the high end at our discipline system that we need to take our time and investigate that. What that looks like yet, I don't know. But we've got one of our GECs, one of our government election commitments, is to work with our partners to look at the discipline system again.

We know the discipline system has been reviewed multiple times. Every time we review the discipline system we think we get it right, and then it becomes this system that just takes forever.

I see staff being stood down, suspended and then, at the end of those investigations, you know, we're educating our staff, well, we got to get that bit right. It has a big impact. You know, they're out there doing the right thing. We've got to try and get back to our Sergeants, our Senior Sergeants, our Commissioned Officers having a big role in that initial discipline approach of our staff and are empowered to make

I don't know, but having been someone who has been through it, it has a profound impact on you.

QPU: Give us your quick response to the following people. Police Minister Dan Purdie?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: My engagement with Dan so far, I think he's a copper's copper. So I'm going to say that. It is nice to actually brief a Minister who understands exactly what we go through. I think he's genuine and I think he's there to truly deliver for the coppers.



QPU: Premier David Crisafulli?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I didn't know the Premier much until I got into the Disaster Management stuff. I have worked extremely closely with him. He is extremely well disciplined. He's focused. He genuinely believes in service delivery for the community. All of those three things set us up well, because I think we have demonstrated that we can deliver.

QPU: QPU General President Shane Prior?

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: I've had a bit of engagement with Shane over the years in my Command roles and Shane's always advocating for the members very strongly. We've had a good relationship over the years. I think he genuinely wants to deliver for the troops. He genuinely wants to work with us to do that, but I don't know if everyone understands, he will hold all levels of the QPS to account in delivering. I can only ask that of him as well. I get along with him well. I think he is very genuine. When Shane rings me I know he's ringing me for a purpose because Shane has built relationships with Executive Members. And this is how I've known him as an AC, as a Deputy. He's built relationships with those Executive Members to be able to represent for the organisation. When he rings me, I know that is something that him and I need to discuss.

QPU: Finally, your 10 second speech for police across Queensland no matter where they are working.

ACTING COMMISSIONER CHELEPY: The focus I have taken since day one relieving Steve, because I know Steve had the focus, but I can guarantee the coppers there that every day every decision I make, every time someone brings something up to me in the ELT, I am looking at it through a lens of how does this help frontline service delivery. That's what I am going to say to them. I am going to go back into the real small details and say, okay, "What's impacting you."

I am going to be like a dog on a bone making sure that we are focusing on things that make a difference. That's what I can give in my guarantee to them.



Police are calling for urgent action from Australian political leaders to fix a national recruitment crisis, as vacancies in the ranks blow out to more than 7000 unfilled positions across Australia.

The campaign, led by the Police Federation of Australia on behalf of all state and territory police, calls for drastic improvements in working conditions to boost recruitment numbers and prevent more burnt-out officers quitting their jobs.

The campaign argues that police should be immediately granted three federal government benefits, some of which are already enjoyed by other frontline workers like nurses, paramedics and defence personnel.

The benefits are:

- Fringe benefit tax (FBT) concessions reforms of up to \$17,000, in line with public hospital and ambulance service workers;
- Earlier access to superannuation at 55 years to reflect the significant physical and mental impacts from long careers in policing; and
- Introduction of a Blue Card covering medical and allied health services, to match the concessions available to Australian Defence Forces.

PFA Chief Executive Scott Weber said such benefits were urgently needed at a time when police resources were being stretched to the limit amid growing community concerns about crime and safety.

“Modern policing is a physically dangerous and mentally draining occupation, with our officers dealing constantly with complex, often ambiguous and sometimes life-threatening challenges,” Mr Weber said.

“While we’ve all heard our politicians talk about the importance of Australians feeling safe at home and in their communities, the simple fact is: you can’t improve community safety without improving police recruitment and retention numbers.

“And you can’t improve police retention and recruitment without improving police working conditions.

“In short, for the community to feel safer, we need our police to be better supported to do their jobs – and today we’ve outlined

three simple things our federal government can do that would make a big difference towards that goal.”

Mr Weber said policing generally fell under the jurisdiction of state governments, but superannuation, health and tax benefits were key areas where the federal government could intervene to boost conditions, as it has with frontline health workers and defence personnel.

With a Federal election scheduled for Saturday May 3, 2025 it’s time to ask candidates in your electorates if they will support and deliver benefits for police.





QR BEFORE INTERVIEW

**IN THE FAST TECH
RELIANT WORLD
WE LIVE IN TODAY,
STAYING INFORMED AND
EMPOWERED IS MORE
CRUCIAL THAN EVER.**

That's why we have introduced a new feature for our QPU members - a QR link that provides guidance for those required to submit to a lawful direction interview or statement.

This handy tool is designed to streamline the process and ensure our members have access to important information whenever they need it.



Gone are the days of flipping through pages in an annual diary to find the guidelines for handling investigations. We are using technology to make it easier for members to access the necessary resources.

Take a screen shot of the QR code below and store it securely on your mobile device, that way you can quickly refer to the guidelines and be well-prepared for any situation that may arise.

The full Directions Advice Document can also be found on the QPU website.

It is important to note that this guideline for members under investigation is exclusive to QPU members only. We are committed to providing our members with the support and resources they need to navigate challenging situations with confidence.

A member requested to submit to an interview or provide a statement should always contact the QPU Legal team first on 3259 1900.

**TOGETHER,
WE STAND STRONG
AS A UNION.**



GRADUATION DAY MARCH

BY DARREN CURTIS

AUTUMN 2025

**THE QPS ANNOUNCED
THE GRADUATION
CEREMONY ON
MARCH 13, 2025 WAS
THE LARGEST IN THIRTY
THREE YEARS.**

Combining Intake 6/2024 with PACE 3/2024 delivered 155 Constables for the induction on the Tom Molloy Parade Ground at the Oxley Academy. The graduates however had already participated in 'active service' deployed to assist with evacuations and community support as part of the response to Tropical Cyclone Alfred in early March.

QPU President Shane Prior welcomed the cohort and thanked them for their early service during the Cyclone crisis "you have already shown you have what it takes to offer leadership when the community needs it. For me integrity is one of the most important aspects of an Officer's career, it's something I



think about every day, not just in the actions we take when we are on duty but also what you do away from this job. You already have high achievement status with problem solving and I encourage you to continue using the skills you acquired in other careers before you joined the QPS. You bring perspectives that will benefit your colleagues and the people of Queensland. I also want you to know joining the Queensland Police Union means you will never be alone and your families are now part of our family."

Thirty of the new Constables come from existing police families, just as many have prior military service and ninety seven of the graduates have tertiary qualifications but the cross culture mix was rare. Seventy three of the new Constables were born overseas.

The reviewing officer was Acting Police Commissioner Shane Chelepy, his first graduation since stepping into the role following the sudden and unexpected personal leave taken by Police Commissioner Gollschewski. Acting Commissioner Chelepy said "It's an absolute honour to be here tonight to celebrate this significant milestone. I hope through your career you continue to seek innovative ways to extend community safety."



Constable Jelena Middleton accepts the QPU Dux Award from QPU President Shane Prior.



Constable Jelena Middleton is presented with the Domestic and Family Violence Training Award.



QPU Dux Award recipient Constable Jelena Middleton was also awarded the Domestic and Family Violence Training Award for highest achievement in practical application in investigating DFV. Constable Middleton said “before joining the QPS I was a police dispatcher in New Zealand and a big part of our work was receiving those DV calls and triaging them like you do here in Australia. It’s a large part of our calls for service. Now that I’m going to be the one knocking on the door to help it’s going to be completely different and I’m excited to see what I can do. We’ve done a lot of scenario based training so I hope I will be prepared for it but I expect it’s going to bring an emotional load. I am however hoping for some variety not just DV jobs.”



Constable Jelena Middleton celebrates graduation with her family.

Constable Middleton is heading for Rockhampton City station and knows moving from New Zealand on her own to Central Region will be a big challenge solo. Family from New Zealand flew out for the graduation ceremony but the award winning officer knows she won’t be alone “the QPU has made it clear they will be a partner, helping all of us through this really challenging job and they’ll be there to be our back up if things get hard or go bad.”

For Constable Nick Benson, policing is developing into a family business. Older brother Mitchell was able to be the table officer for Nick and younger brother Constable Andrew Benson was there as well to wish him good luck with the new brotherly career. Constable Nick Benson said “it was really cool Mitch was able to fly down from Mackay this morning to swear me in. Now there’s three of us in the police is supercool, I’ve wanted to do this for a while but the timing wasn’t right as I was helping in the family business for a long time but mum and dad have retired so it’s perfect now. I’m heading for Mackay Station and my brother is on the northern beaches in Mackay so we will be close by. Andrew has already done three years and is at Jimboomba but you never know he may move too. I can’t wait to get started, my wife and our five animals are looking forward to settling into the local lifestyle.”



The Benson brothers.

Police Minister Dan Purdie said he could understand the attraction for families to join the same career “all I ever wanted to be was a police officer, I thought it was an honourable profession and I wanted to be a part of it. The oath you swear is one of the most important acts any Queenslander can do. What Queenslanders hear when you say those words is ‘that you will keep them safe.’

The ceremony also acknowledged fallen officer Constable Sondra Lena who died after being struck by a car on the Bruce Highway near Rockhampton in 1992. Her mother Sandra was invited to lay a wreath before a minutes sacred silence. Sandra was later presented with the QPS Blue Heart Medal to honour Sondra’s sacrifice. Mrs Lena said “I feel close to Sondra out here at the Academy. This is where it all started for her, she loved what she did. I love this blue family, they are my backbone, I couldn’t have got through her death without them. I know Sondra is never forgotten and that was the biggest fear when she died that no-one would ever remember she was here but look at this honour tonight in front of 155 new Constables and their families. This Blue Heart medal is beautiful but I don’t think I will ever wear it, it’s Sondra’s and unfortunately she will never have a chance to wear or hold it, but I can cherish it forever.”



Sandra Lena was emotional accepting the QPS Blue Heart Medal for a member who has been seriously injured or killed on duty.



Constable Brittany Faulkner receives the Community Service Award from Mitch Ryder representing Police Citizens Youth Clubs.





Constable Paloma Oliveira receives the Sondra Lena memorial Physical Skills Award presented by Sandra Lena



Constable Fraser Wildman receives the Dan Stiller memorial Traffic Award sponsored by RACQ.





Tony Ross from QBank presents the Achievement Award to Constable Christopher Deegan.





The Operational Skills Award was presented to Constable Mason Allam.

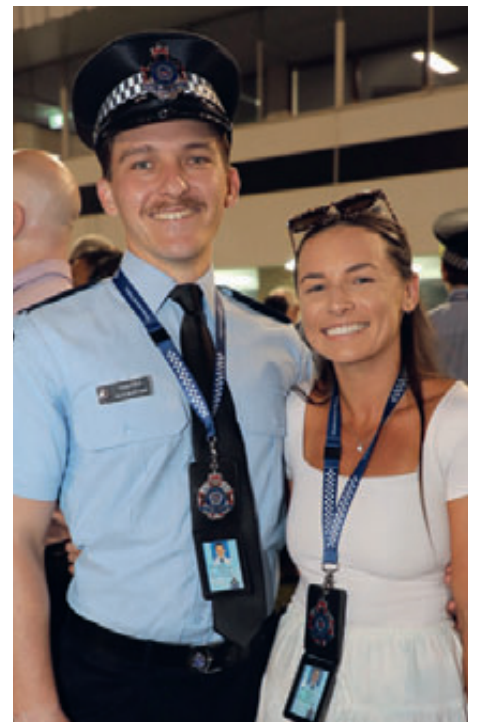


Constable Brittany Faulkner receives the Leadership Award from Queensland Police Commissioned Officers Union President Kerry Johnston.





Constable Daniel Rudledge receives the Commissioner's Award from Acting Commissioner Shane Chelepy.





THE QPU MAKE DFV A CRIME CAMPAIGN

WHY THE QPU?

As police, we are sworn to protect life and property. It is our number one priority. DFV victims are some of the most vulnerable in our society and DFV incidents are rising at unprecedented levels.

Despite the fact the LNP Government has committed to DFV Reforms any meaningful change for the role of police in the DFV 'system' has historically been difficult.

Before deciding on a campaign, the QPU undertook extensive consultation with members, actual victim survivors and the DFV sector. The QPU has been open and transparent about the campaign and drafts of the Blueprint for Action have been provided to a multitude of stakeholders. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some critics of police responses to domestic and family violence mobilising to prevent QPU (and QPS) attempts to make your job of protecting victims more streamlined and effective.

The criticism beginning to emerge can be summarised as follows:

- police can't be trusted to correctly identify the person most in need of protection;
- reinforces incident based policing approaches - police need to do more to ensure responses identify patterns of behaviour (e.g. coercive control); and
- despite the apparent lack of trust in policing responses held by some, critics still expect police to keep turning up to the more than 200,000 projected occurrences annually.

This type of criticism from some stakeholders shows we can take nothing for granted when the Government states it is committed to reforming DFV. As much as the QPU appreciates and welcomes the Government's commitment, we will need to fight tooth and nail to bring about any real improvements for frontline policing.

This is the reason the QPU launched its campaign. The voices of our frontline members **must be heard and listened to**.

Katarina Carroll tried throughout her Commissionership to effect positive changes for the frontline but was blocked at every turn. Commissioner

Gollschewski is equally focussed on positive reform but faces the same resistance.

The current DFV system is letting down victims and is affecting our workforce on so many fronts (recruitment, retention, vicarious trauma and impacts on well-being, job satisfaction etc.) and it is vital your Union does all it can to usher in the change so often promised but never delivered.

This campaign also flows into other initiatives for QPU members. It creates a strong public presence for the QPU in terms of public support for police as we commence EB bargaining (our number one priority). The issues of attraction and retention of staff are significant and provide a basis for promoting the need for salary sacrificing and a blue “free health care” card for police with both parties in the upcoming Commonwealth election.

Members should rest assured this is only part of a series of strategies and policies the QPU is promoting to ensure better conditions and pay for QPU members.

Please sign the petition at: **MakeDVaCrime.com.au**



**Sometimes our protectors
need protecting...**

***for a fair and
just outcome
become a
member***



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES
Telephone: 07 3259 1900 • Fax: 07 3259 1950





THE QPU MAKE DFV A CRIME CAMPAIGN

BENEFITS OF A STAND-ALONE DFV OFFENCE FOR FRONTLINE POLICING.

Improved Police Efficiency:

- Reduces time spent on DVO applications and court appearances.
- Allows police to focus on core duties: investigation, evidence gathering, victim support.
- Enables quicker response times and proactive policing.
- Reduces community fear of crime due to a visible police presence returning.
- The estimated equivalent of more than 600 experienced police officers can be returned to frontline policing for proactive patrols and calls for service that police currently can't get to.

Since the beginning of this year, 31 General Duties Queensland Police Officers have resigned from the QPS as of 17 February 2025. The overwhelming feedback given to the QPU by these departing officers is they have 'DFV' fatigue and the overwhelming amount of DFV callouts stops them from undertaking the other important policing duties they should be doing to protect all Queenslanders.

Under current DFV laws, without a willing complainant, the first act of DFV reported to police does not proceed as a criminal offence. This is unacceptable, and the law is failing victims. The only option available to police without a complainant is for the investigating officer to make a domestic violence protection order application.

The paperwork, red tape, statistic gathering and bureaucracy around making, prosecuting and serving applications means calls for service, including other DFV jobs and serious crimes, do not receive a timely response. There is a tangible link that this could result in lives being lost.

By creating a standalone offence, every victim will have the protection of a standard DFV protection order at all times, whether they are a resident in Queensland or visiting. Police will be able to act without the need for a complaint; thus, reducing the risk of retribution to a complainant. We want to change a system which allows perpetrators a 'free first hit'.

By protecting victims through an offence, the need for applications for orders with only standard conditions is removed. It also prevents perpetrators from

making cross applications and using the system to further traumatise and abuse the victim.

Safeguards will be introduced to protect against misidentification of victims and for self-defence. Similarly, to ensure matters are exempted where it is deemed there is no public interest in prosecuting, police will have the statutory discretion to refer the parties to specialist service providers. A common example would include two brothers having a dispute at a family celebration, where there is no history of DFV, no power imbalance, and no desire by either party for police intervention.

The offence will be supported by **Police Protection Directions**. These will be issued on the civil balance of probabilities standard and will be able to be enforced immediately. They will be able to include additional conditions, such as ouster, cooling down no contact. They will be similar to the current PPNs, however, the onus will be on the perpetrator to elect within 28 days of issue, to go to court; otherwise the direction remains in place for 12 months. There will be an administrative scheme to allow for amendments, as well as an avenue for applications to the Court.

These two initiatives are to be supported by permitting the use of BWC footage in lieu of the evidence in chief of complainants and witnesses. This will be similar to what occurs now for s93A interviews with child victims. This initiative will reduce the trauma for victims by not requiring them to relive their experience during evidence in chief.

There are other proposals too, including treating serial offenders who victimise multiple partners in a similar way to sex offenders, where police will be able to undertake random checks of their computers and electronic devices, and where they will be banned from nightclubs (using the existing systems for liquor banning notices) and using online dating platforms.

Please sign the petition at: **MakeDVaCrime.com.au**



Without us, you're on your own

**When you need professional
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QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES

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QUEENSLAND POLICE **UNION**

MAKE DFV **A** **CRIME**

‘QPU BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION’

28 MARCH 2025

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		Page 3
PRIORITY 1:	Make DFV a Crime - <i>It's a crime every time!</i>	Page 12
PRIORITY 2:	Appoint a Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence.	Page 34
PRIORITY 3:	Immediately allocate administrative responsibility for Part 4 of the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012</i> to the Police Minister followed by a full review and re-write of the Act.	Page 39
PRIORITY 4:	Permit Body Worn Camera video as evidence in chief in DFV proceedings.	Page 41
PRIORITY 5:	Trial rapid video responses to DFV.	Page 43
PRIORITY 6:	One Stop Shops, Improved Information Sharing and Collaboration.	Page 45
CONSULTATION LIST		Page 48

Executive Summary

Domestic and family violence (DFV) has existed for a very long time. The previous lack of awareness and response can be attributed to the view that it was previously regarded as personal and private family business together with societal values related to the role of women. Indicative of that was that the first legislation in 1989 was some 90 years after the establishment of the Queensland Criminal Code.

In recent times, commencing with the 'Not Now Not Ever' Report and its 140 Recommendations and since then a series of inquiries, reports and recommendations following the tragic murders of Hannah Clarke and her three children in February 2020, the issues associated with domestic and family violence have received wide attention in both Queensland and nationally.

It is sometimes overlooked that domestic and family violence is also having significant and far-reaching impacts on children in Australia, both in the short and long term. These impacts affect various aspects of a child's development, including emotional, psychological, physical, and social well-being. Some of these impacts are manifesting in offending behaviours that ultimately put children in contact with the criminal justice system. There was sufficient evidence to this effect offered by various stakeholders to the recent parliamentary Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's inquiry into the Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024.

The *Unlocking the Prevention Potential* report prepared by the Rapid Review Expert Panel established by National Cabinet included the following chilling fact:

Data relating to the homicides of children and young people is likely to be underreported but should be brought firmly into the spotlight. In cases of filicide where there was a Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence context, for example, children are often not reported as a victim of violence to authorities, despite domestic and family violence (DFV) being a significant risk factor for filicide

Additionally, the Rapid Review Expert Panel noted a recent report released by ANROWS indicating that 76 per cent of filicides nationwide occur within the context of DFV, involving a history of child abuse, intimate partner violence, or both. The ANROWS study involved 113 cases of filicide occurring between 2010 and 2018, with 86 cases (76 per cent) having an identifiable history of DFV.

In 2023-24, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) responded to 192,287 DFV occurrences in Queensland, which equates to approximately 526 domestic violence occurrences across

the State daily. This is up from 171,841 occurrences in 2022-23 and means that police officers across Queensland respond to a DFV-related occurrence approximately once every 3 minutes. Concerningly, the ABS, Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22 report estimates that up to 80% of DFV occurrences go unreported. By extension, the DFV sector is similarly overwhelmed by the growing demand. This places added pressure and expectations on police to fill the space that rightfully falls to DFV specialists trained in intervention and counselling, including making civil applications to the Court.

The QPU is in receipt of constant advice and concern from its members across the State as to the impact on the primary policing roles of the protection of the public, its safety and their property security. Some police advise that DFV accounts for up to 90% of their workload.

The QPU is not advocating that police should not be first responders but as indicated the current processes are unsustainable and will become increasingly so.

The societal change to reduce and prevent DFV to the greatest extent possible will take a long time. Significant past societal changes such as attitudes to drink driving, cigarette smoking and sun protection (against skin cancer) took decades to bear fruit and were characterised by inarguable data. The data also supports the need to change societal views about DFV, which has the additional aspect of the complexity of human relationships. It is fundamentally essential then that our responses make the best use of our limited resources as possible.

The QPU is very concerned about the welfare aspect of its members who are regularly, repeatedly and constantly attending DFV matters. When domestic violence escalates to the point where a police crisis response is required the dynamics of that incident are both highly unpredictable and potentially violent. The risk factors increase where alcohol and drugs are involved and where there is no prior information available about those involved.

The QPU also holds the following concerns about officer welfare and QPS's duty of care in relation to:

- Minimising the risks of physical harm.
- Minimising the risks of psychological harm.
- Vicarious trauma.
- Compassion fatigue.
- The lack of support services e.g. crisis accommodation.
- The likely link to the current levels of police officer attrition.

- The frustration experienced by officers who due to constant attendance at DFV matters are frustrated at being unable to address other issues such as break and enters, car theft and road safety.
- Unreasonable criticism of officers' good faith decision making in difficult highly elevated circumstances by those who later hold different views.
- The cumulative impact in respect of the heightened levels associated with risk, alertness and adrenalin.

We are now almost nine years into Queensland's ten-year DFV reform agenda under the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026*, with four sequential action plans, the last of those, the Fourth Action Plan is currently being progressed. It sets out a four-part approach of:

- Prevention;
- Early Intervention;
- Crisis Response; and
- Recovery.

National Cabinet is also responding to this crisis by accelerating action to end gender-based violence in a generation and deliver on the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.

Without criticism of any aspect of the above Strategies and Action Plans, the current reality is that there is an avalanche of DFV complaints and the **crisis response**, which is primarily the role of the QPS, is by far the greatest area of activity. This is unsustainable for the QPS and will become increasingly so unless remedial changes are introduced.

The QPS is not alone in this regard, as mentioned other areas under stress are the services of DFV organisations, crisis accommodation and the availability of perpetrator programs.

For example, DVConnect fields 450 calls a day on average, connecting many callers with services on the ground across the State. Demand for help through DVConnect has increased by one-third in the past 12 months.

The *QPU Blueprint for Action* identifies five priority areas to enhance whole of system responses to the scourge of domestic and family violence. **Priority Area 1**, the centrepiece of the *Blueprint for Action*, is to **Make DFV a Crime** through the creation of a new standalone offence of "committing domestic violence" within the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*. This offence would be complemented by a requirement in

respect to either refusing bail or otherwise imposing bail conditions which put the protection of the victim and the victim's children as the primary purpose.

The proposed offence optimises the ability of Queensland Police to immediately protect victim survivors, including an ability for police to issue Protection Directions. These Directions would be issued in conjunction with bail conditions where an arrest is made.

The Police Protection Directions would take immediate effect and remain in force for 12 months. The perpetrator would have 28 days following issue to elect to contest the matter in court. The onus will be on the perpetrator to make that election. The level of proof required for issuing this type of Direction would be the civil standard of the balance of probabilities. This type of protection direction, as envisaged by the QPU, is currently being used effectively in Tasmania. There would also need to be an administrative support system to allow for amendments to such directions, including in the event of misidentification of the perpetrator, their withdrawal and cancellation.

Making DFV a crime and creating Police Protection Directions will also assist to streamline the legal response to domestic and family violence by removing the need for Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs) with standard conditions as a prerequisite for prosecution.

In essence, the creation of this offence means every individual is protected at all times from DFV. The need for a victim survivor to have to go to court to get a protection order under current laws would be removed. This is because all victim survivors would automatically have the minimum level of protection at all times. There will no longer be a five year limit to orders. It means victim survivors will not need to relive their trauma by giving evidence to obtain that initial level of protection, as the offence will always provide it.

The operation of the offence also means perpetrators will be unable to weaponise the current protection system by bringing a cross order application.

The QPU contends it is time to put the onus on the perpetrators of DFV by holding them accountable for their actions and for encouraging them to modify their behaviour to break the DFV cycle. This approach is consistent with the Foundational Elements and Guiding Principles of the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026*, and its *Fourth Action Plan 2022-23 to 2025-2026*.

The QPU senses community frustration that despite numerous enquiries, recommendations, strategies, action plans and significant government investment, DFV occurrences are growing exponentially, services are overwhelmed, and police are spread too thin. That's why we will be launching a statewide *Make DFV a Crime* campaign to lay

out the case for change and seek public support for a standalone offence of ‘committing domestic violence’.

Priority Area 1 is underpinned by other priority areas designed to alleviate pressure on the broader DFV system and streamline frontline policing responses.

Priority Area 2 reinforces the QPU’s contention an initial frontline police response must solely focus on the immediate protection of victim survivors and then be supported by specialist services as part of a whole of system response. That’s why the QPU advocates for the statutory appointment of a **Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence** to:

- provide advice to the government on issues affecting DFV;
- work collaboratively with the DFV Peak and other stakeholders to optimise DFV prevention and responses;
- allocate funding to DFV services; and
- foster the DFV sector’s participation in policy and legislative processes.

The QPS has an Assistant Commissioner for its Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command and DFV Prevention has been a specified discrete Ministerial portfolio responsibility for successive governments. However, it needs someone in authority, dedicated to DFV, to provide a single focus point and high-level direction in the State’s effort eliminate all forms of domestic and family violence and abuse.

Ideally such a person would be the Minister responsible for the DFV portfolio; but in the alternative a DFV Commissioner or a Deputy Commissioner for DFV attached to the Victims’ Commissioner’s Office.

Notably, the creation of a Commissioner type position was also a recommendation made by Ms Betty Taylor, Chief Executive Officer of the Red Rose Foundation, in a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Police Responses to DFV (COI-DFV) in which the Foundation called for:

....the establishment of an Office of Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Commissioner similar to the Children’s Commissioner to provide external oversight, policy direction, research, and victim safety advocacy.

Ultimately, the COI-DFV recommend the establishment a victims’ commissioner, as an independent statutory officer, to assist victim-survivors of DFV and to provide oversight of police responses to DFV, supported by a deputy commissioner to lead this capability.

In 2022, the Australian Government established the Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Commission, appointing Micaela Cronin as its inaugural Commissioner. In 2023, the NSW Government prioritised women's safety by becoming the first state or territory in Australia to have a standalone Women's Safety Commissioner. The QPU envisages the creation of a similar position in Queensland, that is independent of line agencies and reports direct to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

Priority Area 3 relates to the **administration of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*** (the DFVPA). The DFVPA is currently administered by the Honourable Amanda Camm MP, Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence through the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the DFSDSCS). In the longer-term the QPU advocates for a complete re-write of the DFVPA to ensure it is contemporary and understood after more than 10 years of piecemeal amendment.

In the interim, the QPU calls for the transfer of administrative responsibility for Part 4 of the DFVPA, which sets out a range of police functions and powers in relation to DFV, to the Police Minister. Alternatively, the Government should give a commitment to the Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence working closely and collaboratively with the Minister for Police on all DFV issues.

The current administrative arrangement means that the Police Minister and the Queensland Police Service do not have legislative control of the role of police in this challenging and high demand environment. Legislative proposals relating to Part 4 of the DFVPA are required to be taken to the Queensland Cabinet, and ultimately through the Legislative Assembly, by the Minister for DFV Prevention as the responsible Minister.

Priority Area 4 calls for the **immediate expansion and roll-out of the of body worn camera video as evidence in chief in DFV proceedings.**

A QPS - Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) co-led pilot to trial the use of video recorded statements, taken by trained police officers from victim survivors of DFV offences within the Gold Coast and Ipswich Districts concluded in September 2023, and was evaluated by the University of Queensland.

The QPU is aware that the QPS has an 'in-principle' agreement to scope an expanded VRE Program across 5 additional trial sites: Coolangatta; Logan; Townsville; Cairns; and Mt Isa.

The QPU believes that body worn camera evidence is an accurate record of what happened (in a DFV occurrence) and that a modern criminal justice system should be using technology to ensure that more perpetrators are held criminally responsible for their actions. For these reasons the QPU strongly recommends the immediate roll-out of the of body worn camera footage as evidence in chief for DFV proceedings statewide.

Priority Area 5 also challenges the status quo by championing a new approach to supplement the Queensland Police response to DFV. **Rapid Video Response (RVR)** has been successfully trialled in the United Kingdom (UK) and the QPU advocates that Queensland should follow suit.

RVR enables officers to engage with family violence victims virtually in critical moments, providing a fast response and immediate support to victims of crime. UK police report that the initiative has enhanced victim engagement and satisfaction.

A trial by the Kent Police demonstrated RVR effectiveness, reducing response times for high-priority family violence cases from a mean average of 32hrs 49 minutes to 3 minutes.

The program replicates what frontline officers do, but with a digital operating model to improve the victim's journey. The victim receives the same service as if an officer attends in person but without the delay.

Priority Area 6 calls for the establishment of **one stop shops and improved information sharing and collaboration** across the DFV 'system'. This priority area has been included late in the development of the QPU Blueprint in response to feedback garnered through extensive consultation with stakeholders.

Improved outcomes for DFV victims hinge on all participants in the DFV system working collaboratively. While progress has been made in Queensland thanks to the findings and recommendations of various taskforces and inquiries the QPU has learned, through consultation, opportunities remain to build on the foundations now in place.

For example, there are elements of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) developed in Victoria in response to their Royal Commission into Family Violence that could be adapted to Queensland. In particular, the Child Information Sharing Scheme which enables authorised organisations and services to share information to promote the wellbeing or safety of children and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme which also enables authorised organisations and services to share information to facilitate assessment and

management of family violence risk to children and adults are worthy of consideration in Queensland.

Picking up on the need for better information sharing, the DFV Perpetrator Visibility Project, for which a proof of concept has been developed in partnership by Microsoft, Griffith University, the Queensland Police Service, Domestic Violence Action Centre and DVConnect, identifies there is a data capability gap in the domestic and family violence space that could be bridged by automating information sharing across disparate government and non-government systems.

One stop shops or safety hubs are also a feature of the response to DFV in Victoria through the Orange Door service. The Orange Door network aims to be accessible, safe and welcoming, providing quick and simple access to support for:

- adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence
- families who need support with the care and wellbeing of children and young people
- perpetrators of family violence.

It brings services together as a partnership so that individuals and families don't have to go to multiple services or to retell their story multiple times to have their needs met.

In Queensland, Beyond DV has established recovery centres known as Hope Hubs. The Crisafulli Government has already recognised the value of this model and committed funding for the establishment of additional Hope Hubs as part of its Government Election Commitments. Support provided at Hope Hub recovery centres includes peer support morning teas, DV counselling, group therapy, legal support, housing advocacy, financial counselling, job readiness activities, career mentoring, training and employment opportunities.

Consideration could also be given to leveraging the existing network of 87 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCC)s to house DFV support services. Medicare UCCs are located across Australia in existing general practice settings, community health centres and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. They are open early and late every day of the year. The Albanese Government has announced funding of \$644 million to open another 50 sites in 2025-26.

Conclusion

Presently, the average DFV call for service can take officers between four and six hours to resolve. This is largely due to the amount of paperwork necessary for making DFV

applications for protection orders. The QPU estimates the time savings achievable through a standalone DFV offence could immediately return the equivalent of more than 600 experienced officers to the frontline.

The DFV Sector is similarly under resourced and overwhelmed by demand.

Almost nine years into Queensland's ten-year DFV reform agenda perpetrator behaviours have not sufficiently changed, and victim survivors remain at unacceptable risk.

On 13 February 2025, the QPU launched a statewide public campaign to make domestic a family violence a crime (every time), underpinned by an e-petition on the Queensland Parliament website. At the close of the e-petition today almost 50,000 Queensland residents had added their names to our urgent call to action. This result is among the best achieved for an e-petition is a significant demonstration of public support for the campaign.

The QPU Blueprint for Action provided the narrative for our statewide campaign and was a living document throughout, with refinement and iterations over several months based on numerous discussions with frontline police, sector stakeholders, victim survivors, politicians and academics. I thank all stakeholders who generously gave up their time to speak with me and for the sincerity of their engagement. Extensive consultation allowed me to understand system wide issues from various perspectives and has led to a better informed suite of suggestions. The Blueprint for Action contains sensible proposals to enhance whole of system responses to DFV by alleviating pressure on frontline services, holding DFV offenders accountable, and, importantly, better protecting and supporting victim survivors.

Although our statewide campaign has ended the QPU's journey has not. During our next phase of activity the QPU will continue to advocate for meaningful reforms to the DFV system and will be watching the Government's response to the e-petition closely to ensure Queensland Police, stakeholders, victim survivors and our supporters are not let down.



Shane Prior
General President
Queensland Police Union

28 March 2025

Priority 1: Make DFV a Crime – *It's a crime every time!*

1. Background

- In 2000, the Taskforce on Women and the Criminal Code (Qld) recommended the Queensland Government investigate the creation of a 'specific offence of domestic or family violence', to 'specifically name the behaviour and encourage the prosecution of it'.
- In 2014, the Queensland Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee – Inquiry on Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Criminal Activity recommended that the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland (the Special Taskforce), led by the Hon. Quentin Bryce, consider possible legal amendments to strengthen the operation and application of the DFVP Act, including standalone domestic and family violence offences.
- The Special Taskforce considered the desirability of the creation of a standalone 'umbrella' offence of domestic violence, noting the benefit of this approach would be to allow police to apply protective bail conditions following the arrest of a perpetrator.
- Although the Special Taskforce's final report *Not Now Not Ever*, delivered in February 2015, noted there had been calls throughout Queensland for such an offence, it did not ultimately recommend a standalone DFV offence.
- The Special Taskforce found the difficulties with prosecuting existing offences involving domestic and family violence related more to challenges with evidence gathering, witness cooperation, police practices and court processes which may undermine the effective use of existing Criminal Code provisions.
- The Special Taskforce found enacting a new offence specifically for domestic and family violence facing the same evidentiary and process issues may not achieve the goal of protecting victims or increasing accountability of perpetrators.
- The Special Taskforce also heard from many victims who did not want their partners to be subjected to criminal proceedings or who feared the impacts to the family of monetary penalties. Service providers were concerned a dedicated offence would place victims who use violence in retaliation or self-defence at great risk of prosecution.
 - The QPU recognises the view of Service providers, and believes this risk can be alleviated, like current provisions, which prohibit a victim survivor being

criminally charged as a party to an offence. Additional safeguards would also be imposed which require police, as they presently do, to identify the person most in need of protection before charging, and a similar provision requiring the court to only convict where it is satisfied the defendant is not in fact a victim survivor responding to DFV offending. A further safeguard will recognise victims on some occasions may strike out in response to being the subject of ongoing DFV abuse. It will recognise the need to look holistically at a situation and the lead up to situations both before charging, and as a defence in any criminal proceedings, to further safeguard victims and prevent their misidentification.

- In 2021, the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce examined coercive control and the need for a specific offence of 'commit domestic violence', as well as women's experiences across the criminal justice system as both victims and offenders.

2. **A Standalone Offence, Police Protection Directions & Control Orders**

The creation of a new standalone offence of "committing domestic violence" within the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act* will optimise the ability of Queensland Police to immediately protect victim survivors and aims to streamline the legal response to domestic and family violence by removing the need for Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs) with standard conditions as a prerequisite for prosecution.

Under the current approach, police attending an initial incident of DFV must rely upon the victim survivor to make a criminal complaint; for example, assault or wilful damage. The experience of police, which is strongly reinforced by feedback from the DFV sector, is victims are often reluctant to act as complainants out of fear of further violence and pressure to withdraw their complaints.

In the absence of a complaint, the only action police can take is to make an application for a protection order. Such orders can be contested by the perpetrator. Where this occurs, it means the victim survivor must relieve their trauma and be subject to cross examination in court all in order to get an order made, which has a maximum operational period of five years.

Under the QPU proposal, all victims will automatically be afforded the minimum protection offered by a current DFV protection order, at all times. They will not be exposed to cross examination nor any aspect of the court process in order to receive that protection. Any DFV which is committed against them will be able to be prosecuted by police without the

victim needing to make a complaint. This will also reduce the ability of perpetrators to threaten and abuse victims to withdraw complaints.

This approach provides immediate and consistent legal protection for individuals experiencing DFV, strengthens enforcement mechanisms, and promotes a proactive stance against domestic violence.

Police officers who attend a DFV matter will be able to arrest the perpetrator and charge them, thus affording immediate protection to victims and the children of victims. The *Bail Act* will be strengthened to require such perpetrators to be kept in custody, or, if released on bail, placed on stringent conditions, the primary focus of which is the protection of the victim and the victim's children.

Further efficiencies gained through a modernised approach to applying QPS resources in response to Domestic Violence will increase the accessibility to the services the QPS provides to the communities they serve.

The QPU proposes that the stand-alone DFV offence would be supplemented by Police Protection Directions, similar to the approach adopted in Tasmania, and Control Orders for high-risk DFV perpetrators as discussed below.

Police Protection Directions

- **Issuance:**

Police officers must consider issuing police protection directions whenever they attend a DFV incident. These directions would be issued even in cases where the perpetrator is arrested. This means a perpetrator may be subject to bail conditions in addition to mirroring protection directions.

Examples of situations where this could arise is where a couple is in the process of a relationship breakup and emotions are high, but no DFV has been committed. It would allow for a cooling off period, with the parties being separated.

A decision not to issue a Direction must be approved by a senior officer of at least the rank of Sergeant, who was not involved in investigating the call for service.

- **Content:**

Directions may include ouster conditions, cool off periods, no contact conditions, and other measures to protect relevant persons and prevent DFV.

- **Duration:**

Directions take effect immediately and remain in force for 12 months or until successfully contested in court.

The obligation would be on the perpetrator to elect to contest the Direction in court by making an election to do so within 28 days of the Direction being issued. A failure to make the election would mean the Direction becomes final. However, there would remain an administrative process (similar to banning notices in respect to licenced premises) where the conditions could be modified, or the directions immediately withdrawn in the case of misidentification of a victim survivor.

Misidentification and Safeguards

One of the consistent issues raised by stakeholders with whom the QPU has consulted is the issue of police misidentifying the person most in need of protection in DFV occurrences and the potential for a stand-alone DFV offence and police protection directions to exacerbate the impacts on misidentification on the true victim survivors.

The QPS has rolled-out comprehensive specialised DFV training to police officers since the final report of the Commission of Inquiry in Police Responses to DFV was delivered in November 2022. At that time the number female respondents in DFV matters recorded by the QPS was reportedly around 22-23% of all matters. In 2025, that figure is understood to have fallen to around 12-13%. The accepted level according to researchers, academics and experts in the DFV sector is 7-8%. While the concerted efforts of the QPS to deliver cultural change within its workforce and uplift their capability and expertise is showing positive signs the QPU acknowledges anecdotal evidence from the Queensland DFV sector that misidentification is still occurring too frequently.

While the proposals in this Blueprint to create a stand-alone DFV offence and introduce police protection directions will not of themselves add to police misidentification levels the QPU acknowledges that any misidentification that occurs could have more serious implications for a wrongly identified respondent than it would currently.

For this reason the QPU proposes a range of safeguards, including:

- Strengthening QPS risk assessment and safety planning tools to protect victims of DFV.

- Prior to a police officer being able to charge with the stand alone offence, or issue a Police Protection Directive, the officer must hold a reasonable belief the person to be charged (or to receive the direction) is:
 - a. not the person most in need of protection;
 - b. the act or acts which constituted the DFV matter were not as a consequence of the person acting in defence of themselves, another, or theirs or another's property (which includes pets); and
 - c. the taking of a holistic view as to the circumstances of the alleged offending (for example, was it really a case of a victim of ongoing DFV abuse taking pre-emptive action in order to protect themselves or their loved ones?).
- Prior to a Court being able to convict a person of the stand-alone offence, the Court itself must be satisfied the prosecution have proven the person charged is not both (a) not the person most in need of protection; (b) the person was not acting in defence; and (c) a holistic view of the alleged offending is such that it was not a victim taking pre-emptive measures to ensure their safety or the safety of their loved ones.
- Continuing a 100% audit by supervising QPS officers of all charges and police protection directions where the respondent is female.
- Reducing the harm caused to victim survivors by potential misidentification of the victim, by empowering an independent authority, such as the DFV Commissioner or similar position, to advise the Police Commissioner in instances where a victim survivor has incorrectly been identified as a perpetrator in criminal proceedings, and/or police protection directions to be withdrawn or amended as a matter of urgency.

The QPU acknowledges that in response to the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023* the QPS updated its Domestic Violence - Protective Assessment Framework (DV-PAF) to support the identification of the person most in need of protection.

The tool guides on the ground decision-making where conflicting or dual allegations of domestic violence have been reported to Police. DV-PAF resource cards have been distributed to members across the state as a frontline resource for operational use.

Despite updates to the QPS DV-PAF, sector stakeholders continue to provide anecdotal reports concerning higher than acceptable levels of QPS misidentification of respondents. For this reason the QPU recommends the QPS take further steps to strengthen its risk assessment and planning tools in collaboration with sector stakeholders.

The **predominant aggressor guidance and tool** used under the Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) framework in Victoria are prescribed for use by police and specialist family violence workers to ensure accurate identification of the predominant aggressor. Information about the predominant aggressor guideline is not published online nor discussed further in this Blueprint owing to the need to mitigate the risk related to perpetrators of family violence seeing and using the detailed information to further harm victim survivors.

Since the early 1980s, Duluth, a community in Minnesota, USA has been an innovator of ways to hold DFV perpetrators accountable and keep victim survivors safe. The “**Duluth Model**” is an ever-evolving way of thinking about how a community works together to end domestic violence. Features of the Model relating to Duluth Police include:

Report & 5 Risk Questions

Policy 310.7 -An officer investigating any alleged incident of domestic abuse must complete a written report and as per department policy complete the Risk Questions and document the responses in the narrative.

1. Do you think he/she will seriously injure or kill you, your children, or someone else close to you? What makes you think so? What makes you think not?
Does he/she have access to guns?
2. How frequently does he/she assault you? Describe the time you were the most frightened or injured by him/her.
3. Does he/she initiate unwanted contact either electronically or in person?
Describe the unwanted contact. How often?
4. How frequently does he/she intimidate or threaten you? Has he/she intimidated or threatened you regarding talking to police or seeking help from the court?
5. Has he/she ever forced you to do things sexually you didn't want to?

The Duluth risk assessment tool is not unique there are others, such as the **Geiger Institute ‘Danger Assessment for Law Enforcement’**, that could also be used to further strengthen the QPS DV-PAF.

Improved QPS risk assessment tools will assist in uncovering matters with the potential for high risk of homicide (or harm) and allow great police-sector partnerships to protect victims, for example, by arranging emergency accommodation.

Self-Defence

Policy 310.3.2 -When both parties have used violence:

- Officers must first determine whether any injuries were inflicted as a result of self-defence.
- Reasonable force may be used by any person in resisting or aiding another to resist an offence against the person.
- The use of force must be reasonable for that person given the nature of the threat and may include the use of weapons.
- If one of the persons acted entirely in self-defence, the situation is dealt with as if there were a single offender; arrest the party who was not acting in self-defence as the predominant aggressor.
- Dual arrest is discouraged

Predominant Aggressor

Policy 310.3.2: If police cannot determine self-defence, assess for the predominant aggressor; mandatory arrest when predominant aggressor is determined. To determine predominant aggressor compare the following of both parties:

- Severity of their injuries and their fear(incident)
- Use of force and intimidation
- Prior domestic abuse by either party
- Likelihood of either party to cause future injury
- Strength of each party

Control Orders for High-Risk DFV Perpetrators

- This proposal recommends strengthening the *Domestic and Family Violence Act* by implementing measures mirroring aspects of the New South Wales scheme for serious organised crime participants, including outlaw motorcycle gang members, to manage high-risk perpetrators.
- The QPU recommends this scheme operate alongside GPS tracking on high risk DFV perpetrators, announced by the Crisafulli Government on 20 January 2025.

- Once developed by the Government, the criteria used to identify high risk GPS tracking would also apply for DFV Control Orders.
- This approach recognises the serious and often patterned nature of domestic and family violence and the need for enhanced monitoring and intervention.
- Specifically, the proposal seeks to extend, with appropriate modifications, existing reporting obligations for paedophiles and sex offenders under the Reportable Sex Offenders legislation to certain DFV perpetrators.
- Given the frequent co-occurrence of sexual violence, including rape, within DFV contexts, this extension is crucial to safeguarding vulnerable individuals, including victim-survivors of DFV.
- Under this proposed framework, designated DFV perpetrators would be mandated to report specific information to law enforcement and maintain its accuracy throughout the reporting period.
- The mandated information would encompass:
 - current name;
 - residential and employment addresses;
 - relationship status and partner details;
 - details of any child residing with or having close contact with the perpetrator (for child protection purposes); and
 - email addresses and passwords.
- Furthermore, these offenders would be subject to conditions, such as GPS tracking devices and providing police access to their mobile phones, tablets, and computers for random and warrantless inspection, consistent with current obligations for reportable sex offenders.
- To mitigate the risk of further offending, these individuals would be prohibited from using online dating platforms and attending nightclubs during the reporting period. This would involve using the existing infrastructure which supports banning notices for licenced premises being expanded to include these perpetrators.
- The reporting period would align with the duration of any active DFV order and extend for five years following the expiration of the most recent order.

- In the absence of criteria yet to be announced for GPS tracking of high risk DFV offenders the QPU suggests control orders be applicable to perpetrators meeting one or more of the following criteria:
 - two or more DFV orders against them within a five-year period, involving different partners;
 - any person convicted of a strangulation offence (for a period of five years post-conviction); and
 - any person a court declares to be a controlled perpetrator.

3. **Rationale for a standalone offence and police protection directions**

The current system, which relies heavily on DVOs, presents several challenges:

- **Delay in Protection:**

Victims often experience violence before a DVO can be obtained, leaving them vulnerable.

At present, a DVO or Police Protection Notice (PPN) needs to be in force, and served on the perpetrator, before it can be enforced. This proposal removes this need, and makes the general law apply. It creates a standalone offence of committing DFV.

In a modern society, individuals should not require a piece of paper to tell them not to assault or abuse their loved ones. Common sense should apply. Perpetrators should be held to account for DFV, regardless of whether they have a DVO telling them not to commit DFV.

- **Administrative Burden:**

The process of applying for and enforcing DVOs places significant burden on victims, police, and the courts.

An average DVO/PPN application takes a police crew approximately four to six hours, depending on its complexity and their experience. DFV calls for service are given priority, meaning police will be directed to attend them before other calls for service.

The consequences of this policy are officers are so tied up with dealing with DFV matters, they are unable to attend other calls for service, such as property crime, proactive patrolling is declining, as are levels of traffic enforcement. Furthermore, this burden reduces the ability of Police officers to provide agility in responding to varying

crime trends at the forefront of community expectations, including youth and juvenile offending due to furnishing overly onerous administrative tasks associated with DFV.

This gives the public a perception there are insufficient police. It allows the community to draw an inference crime is out of control as police are unavailable to deal with routine calls for service.

From a court perspective, the current process also traumatises a victim by potentially requiring them to give evidence and be cross examined, only to receive a piece of paper which says they should not be subject to abuse.

The victim survivor does not just need to face the perpetrator in the court room, and recount the events, but also is exposed to the uncertainty of the court process and the possibility the court will not determine them to need protection.

- **Focus on Orders, Not Behaviour:**

The current system gives no real incentive to perpetrators to break the DFV cycle. Even if a victim is saved, perpetrators often move onto a new victim. There is currently little to address serial perpetrators, and no real incentive to encourage them to change their behaviours. The report 'Not Now, Not Ever' handed to the Queensland Government in 2015 sought to put an end to DFV in QLD however, the implementation of the recommendations failed to address the fact perpetrators are able to inflict serious acts of Domestic Violence on victims prior to perpetrators being held to account criminally for their actions, reducing the intended effect of the report wording 'Not Now, Not Ever'. Effectively, the acceptance of a civil stance relating to DFV permitted perpetrators to have access to 'a free hit' prior to repercussions.

- **Professional Intervention by Consent:**

The current system only allows referral of victims, direct witnesses and perpetrators to professionals with consent. Given the scourge of DFV, police need the ability to refer all involved persons to professional support services without having to first obtain consent.

- **Police are not Social Workers:**

Police officers are not trained to provide professional intervention or counselling to people involved in DFV. They are not trained to make civil applications to the Court. Their role is maintaining the peace, enforcing the criminal law, protecting the community, and apprehending offenders. These functions are core policing functions.

The role of the police in attending DFV should be limited to providing an emergency response to ensure the individuals are safe, investigating any criminal offending and gathering evidence of same, and taking any enforcement action necessary to bring offenders to justice and/or to prevent further offending, which would include refusing bail or imposing stringent bail conditions whose primary purpose is the protection of victims and their children.

The intervention role which is currently performed by police would be better and more effectively performed by professional support services, who can intervene after police have diffused any situation and commenced any necessary prosecutions. If no priority response is required, it could be suggested it would be more beneficial to the parties involved to have direct intervention by professional support services, circumventing a QPS response where no professional expertise is held.

- **Identified value in Standalone Strangulation Offence:**

The key achievements from the implementation of the recommendations from the 'Not Now, Not Ever' report included legislative changes to better protect Queenslanders, including the standalone offence of 'Strangulation'. The realisation that previously accepted 'elements of DFV' could be considered as a criminal offence is a strong indicator that the umbrella act of committing DFV is inherently criminal in nature.

A standalone offence directly criminalises domestic violence, sending a clear message such behaviour is unacceptable and will be met with swift legal consequences. This approach aligns with best practice models internationally, notably in the United States, where many states have enacted specific domestic violence crimes. For example, *California Penal Code* section 273.5 defines "corporal injury to a spouse or cohabitant" as a standalone offence. This shift in focus from protective orders to criminal culpability has been instrumental in enhancing victim safety and holding perpetrators accountable.

4. **Proposed Offence**

4.1 **Definitions**

- **Relevant Relationship:**

Consistent with existing definitions in the DFV Act, encompassing individuals in intimate personal, family, or informal care relationships.

- **Domestic and Family Violence:**

Aligned with the existing definition, including associated domestic violence, exposure to domestic violence, emotional or psychological abuse, intimidation, and economic abuse.

4.2 Protections DFV Professionals

- In keeping with the need for professional support and advice, the QPU proposes any conversations had between a professional from the DFV Sector and a victim should be privileged and attract the same protections for sexual assault counselling. This means victims can approach DFV professionals with the secure knowledge their confidence will be maintained. It also means the DFV Sector workers do not need to be concerned they will suddenly be called as witnesses in Court.

4.3 Elements of the Offence

- It is proposed a standalone offence be created. The provision would make it either a crime or a summary offence to commit domestic violence against another where a relevant relationship exists.

4.4 Defences

- It is proposed prior to a police officer being able to charge with the stand alone offence, or issue a Police Protection Directive, the officer must hold a reasonable belief the person to be charged (or to receive the direction) is:
 - d. not the person most in need of protection;
 - e. the act or acts which constituted the DFV matter were not as a consequence of the person acting in defence of themselves, another, or theirs or another's property (which includes pets); and
 - f. the taking of a holistic view as to the circumstances of the alleged offending (for example, was it really a case of a victim of ongoing DFV abuse taking pre-emptive action in order to protect themselves or their loved ones?).
- Secondly, prior to a Court being able to convict a person of the stand-alone offence, the Court itself must be satisfied the prosecution have proven the person charged is not both (a) not the person most in need of protection; (b) the person was not acting in defence; and (c) a holistic view of the alleged offending

is such that it was not a victim taking pre-emptive measures to ensure their safety or the safety of their loved ones.

4.5 Sentencing

- **Indictable Offence:**

Maximum penalty of 240 penalty units and/or five years imprisonment if the perpetrator has a prior domestic violence conviction within the past five years.

- **Summary Offence:**

Otherwise, a maximum penalty of 120 penalty units and/or three years imprisonment.

In either event, it is proposed the *Penalties and Sentences Act* be amended to provide specifically for DFV sentencing which places the priority on the protection of a victim and the victim's children. The sentencing court must also consider the impact of any sentence on the victim. For example, the imposition of a fine will often be a burden which falls on a victim, as their financial situation is likely to be affected as opposed to that of the perpetrator.

- The impact of a sentence on a victim can itself act as a deterrent in reporting DFV. It is proposed a specialised sentencing regime be implemented to sentencing perpetrators of DFV.
- Under such a scheme, the primary duty of the Court in sentencing will be the protection of the victim survivor, and any children.
- The secondary duty will be to implement a sentence which encourages the perpetrator to genuinely engage in rehabilitative efforts (for example by considering any programs genuinely engaged in whilst on remand)
- The final consideration must be to ensure the consequences of the sentence are unlikely to have an adverse effect on the victim or any children (for example, a fine will often not impact the perpetrator's use of money, but rather the fine will reduce the victim's access to money and be used as a further means of controlling and demeaning the victim).

5. **Procedural and Enforcement Mechanisms**

5.1 **Weapons Licensing**

- **Automatic Suspension:**

Upon arrest or commencement of proceedings, any weapons licence held by the perpetrator is immediately suspended.

- **Ineligibility:**

A conviction (recorded or not) results in immediate cancellation of any weapons licence and ineligibility to apply for a licence in accordance with the *Weapons Act*.

- **Court Discretion:**

Even in cases of acquittal or withdrawal of charges, the court retains the power to impose restrictions on weapons licensing.

5.2 **Extended Protection Orders**

- **Mandatory Consideration:**

The court must consider making an extended protection order in all cases, regardless of the outcome of the proceedings. This would operate in a similar manner to the current anti-stalking orders under the *Criminal Code*. There, the Court can still make a restraining order in circumstances where the proceedings for a stalking offence are discontinued, or the accused is acquitted.

- **Scope of Orders:**

Orders may include ouster conditions, no contact conditions, no approach directions, and any other conditions deemed necessary to prevent DFV and protect relevant persons.

5.3 **Arrest and Bail**

- **Presumption of Arrest:**

Police officers must arrest and transport the perpetrator to a police station or watchhouse unless proceeding by notice to appear or summons is deemed appropriate in the circumstances, prioritising the safety of relevant persons.

- **Presumption of Custody:**

Watchhouse managers and the court must consider holding the perpetrator in custody unless bail conditions can adequately ensure the safety of relevant persons and prevent further DFV. The primary focus of any bail conditions is the protection of the victim survivor and their children.

5.4 Rehabilitation

- The need to have incentives for perpetrators to engage in genuine attempts at rehabilitation in order to break the violence cycle and reduce the likelihood of a person becoming a serial perpetrator with a series of victims.
- It is proposed there be legislative reform, so that a perpetrator who completes courses whilst on remand, or as part of bail programs, or which are self-initiatives, can do so without fear anything said or done during the course would be admissible against them as a means of providing their guilt or liability in Court.
- However, the Court would be entitled to consider genuine attempts at rehabilitation when sentencing such a perpetrator, and where the Court is satisfied the attendance included genuine engagement and attempts to address behaviour, must consider such as a highly mitigating factor.

5.5 Release of Perpetrators

- It is proposed to include a statutory requirement a perpetrator who is released either on bail, or at the conclusion of a period of imprisonment shall continue to be held in custody, despite being granted bail, granted parole, or served their sentence, until any and all victim survivors are notified the perpetrator is being released.
- The period of additional custody cannot exceed 24 hours from the date they would otherwise be released and should be at least one hour after all survivors have been notified, or such longer period which is necessary in the particular circumstances of a victim.
- It is further proposed to seek the Commonwealth Government's support to allow Border Force to advise the AFP and State Police when a perpetrator, who has left Australia, returns, in order to inform the victim.

5.6 Release of Information

- The proposed mandatory referral process be expanded to include referrals to other support agencies which offer specialist services, such as drug and alcohol counselling, rather than just DFV support services.
- Police already have an obligation to report suspect child protection issues to DoCS. It became apparent however from a specialist provider who also works in the child protection sector, that by the time DoCS engages the service provider, harm has already occurred, and court orders are being sought. This in turn has led to, particularly First Nations children, being removed from their family and extended family, as well as their community for lengthy periods.
- It is proposed police be required to report child protection matters not only to DoCS, but also be permitted to release such information to specialist service providers who provide family and child protection services to allow early intervention.
- The existing referral protocol police use on their QLites (iPad issued to officers), has a field relating to the reasons for referral but the referral report does not include the “police report” prepared for QPS purposes. It is proposed the existing field be removed, and instead the referral contain the QPS internal report to provide support services with a fuller picture of the incident and previous police interactions. It is also proposed prior to the referral being able to be submitted, officers will be required to fill out a “new field” which contains the victims best contact number or email address, and tick a box indicating whether it is safe for support services to contact the victim, and if so, during what time periods. It is proposed creating this new field will ensure officers confirm the contact details for a victim are up to date.

5.7 Evidence Act Amendments

- **Admissibility of Recordings:**

Amendments to the *Evidence Act* will allow the admission of police recordings of victim and witness statements in DFV matters, similar to provisions for child sexual offences under section 93A. This streamlines the evidence gathering process and reduces the burden on victims.

It also means victims and witnesses will not be retraumatised by having to give evidence in chief about what happened to them, or what they experienced.

Such witnesses would still be subject to cross examination; simply their evidence-in-chief will be given by tendering the recording.

Existing protections which prevent self-represented perpetrators from cross examining certain witnesses would remain.

All victims would automatically be treated as special witnesses under the *Evidence Act*.

6. Breaking the Perpetrator Cycle

6.1 No-Contest Plea

- **Availability:**

Perpetrators may enter a plea of “no-contest”, authorising the court to proceed as if a guilty plea was entered, provided they have no prior DFV convictions within the past five years.

The Court would proceed to issue an order for the defendant to participate in identified programs, and as such other programs as directed by a service provider. These could extend to alcohol, drug, conflict resolution and anger management programs, amongst others. No sentence would be imposed, and instead the court’s order would require the defendant to reappear in approximately 12 months.

6.2 Revocation:

The no-contest plea may be revoked if the perpetrator successfully completes designated intervention programmes, counselling, and demonstrates a reduced risk of re-offending.

On revocation, the no-contest plea is taken to have never been entered, and no order to have been made. There would be no formal criminal history entry. This operates as an incentive for perpetrators to reform as the absence of a criminal history has a direct benefit to employment prospects. A revocation can only be made if the perpetrator has not been convicted of a DFV offence in the intervening period. Where a charge of DFV remains outstanding, the revocation cannot be determined until that charge has been finalised.

Where a revocation cannot be made, then the Court shall proceed to sentence the defendant as if the no-contest plea was a guilty plea. In sentencing, the Court would have regard to any programs or parts of programs the defendant

did successfully complete. This too will operate as an incentive to participate in programs with a view to reformation.

7. Referrals

- **Early Intervention:**

Police officers are on the front line when it comes to responding to DFV. They often encounter serial perpetrators, who have several DFV orders or convictions involving multiple previous partners.

Police need the ability to inform such serial perpetrators' new partners of the risk they are facing, and to attempt to intervene and prevent the new partner being exposed to the same pattern of DFV.

This could also be achieved by being able to release information to the new partner about a serial perpetrator's DFV history and refer the new partner to appropriate support services to assist that person in escaping before becoming a victim themselves.

- **Automatic Disclosure:**

The proposed automatic referral system, where police disclose contact details of those involved in DFV incidents to service providers without requiring consent, is a crucial element in breaking the cycle of violence. At present this is authorised but only to domestic violence service providers. It is proposed this be opened up, so police and service providers can refer to other professionals as well. Here's why:

- **Reaching those in need:**

Many individuals experiencing DFV may be hesitant or unable to seek help independently due to fear, manipulation, or lack of awareness of available resources. Automatic referral allows service providers to reach out proactively, offering support and guidance at a critical time.

- **Early intervention:**

By connecting individuals with services early on, the cycle of violence can be interrupted, potentially preventing escalation and reducing long-term harm.

- **Fear and isolation:**

Victims of DFV often face isolation and manipulation from abusers, making it difficult to seek help. Automatic referral removes the burden of initiating contact, allowing professionals to establish a connection and provide support.

- **Shame and stigma:**

Shame and stigma associated with DFV can prevent individuals from seeking help. Proactive outreach from service providers can help break down these barriers and encourage engagement.

- **Addressing underlying issues:**

DFV is often intertwined with other complex issues such as substance abuse, mental health concerns, financial difficulties, and parenting challenges. Automatic referral ensures access to a range of services tailored to individual needs, addressing the root causes of violence.

- **Empowerment and self-sufficiency:**

By connecting individuals with services that address their specific needs, automatic referral empowers them to regain control of their lives and build a safer future.

- **Reduced burden on police:**

Automatic referral allows police to focus on their core duties while ensuring that individuals involved in DFV incidents receive appropriate support from specialised services.

- **Improved coordination:**

It facilitates better collaboration between police and service providers, ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive response to DFV.

- **Data collection and evaluation:**

Automatic referral systems can provide valuable data on the prevalence and nature of DFV, enabling better targeting of resources and evaluation of intervention programmes.

- **Ethical Considerations:**

While concerns about privacy and consent are valid, the paramount concern in DFV cases is the safety and well-being of those at risk. Automatic referral strikes a balance by:

- **Prioritising safety:**

The potential benefits of proactive intervention in preventing further harm outweigh the limited disclosure of contact information.

- **Ensuring confidentiality:**

Service providers are bound by strict confidentiality obligations, ensuring that disclosed information is used solely for providing support.

- **Providing opt-out options:**

Individuals should be informed of the referral and given the option to decline further contact with service providers.

Automatic referral to professional services is a vital component of a comprehensive response to domestic violence. By overcoming barriers to help-seeking, providing holistic support, and promoting early intervention, this mechanism plays a crucial role in protecting victims, holding perpetrators accountable, and breaking the cycle of violence.

8. **Role of the Proposed Domestic and Family Violence Commissioner**

- There is a need for strong leadership within the community surrounding the scourge of DFV.
- Ideally the Minister responsible for the DFV portfolio should provide this leadership.
- It is recognised however, Ministers have many responsibilities and the complexity of DFV may require the appointment of an independent DFV Commissioner by statutory appointment.
- The appointment must be a person with extensive experience within the DFV sector, providing professional services and cannot be a police officer or former QPS employee.
- To reduce the harm caused to victim survivors by potential misidentification of the victim, it is proposed the DFV Commissioner be administratively empowered to advise the Police Commissioner in instances where a victim survivor has

incorrectly been identified as a perpetrator in order for criminal proceedings, and/or police protection directions to be withdrawn or amended as a matter of urgency.

- Given the existence of the Victims' Commissioner, and keeping with COI-DFV recommendations, it would also be possible instead of creating a DFV Commissioner, a deputy commissioner position could be created within the Victim's Commissioner's office.
- Ultimately, the focus of this position is to ensure appropriate funding and resourcing is provided to the DFV Sector to ensure a high level of victim support is provided, but also to provide for extensive intervention strategies and programs to curb perpetrator behaviours, as well as educational programs to prevent DFV in the first instance.

9. **Conclusion**

The proposed standalone domestic violence offence represents a significant shift towards a more proactive and victim-centric approach to addressing DFV in Queensland. By criminalising the behaviour directly, streamlining legal processes, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, this reform aims to enhance victim safety, hold perpetrators accountable, and contribute to breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

The introduction of a standalone domestic violence offence offers significant potential for streamlining legal processes and freeing up valuable police and court time. By removing the need to obtain a DVO with standard conditions as a prerequisite for prosecution, this reform eliminates several time-consuming steps currently involved in responding to DFV incidents. Most importantly it removes the possibility of victim survivors being retraumatised by having to give evidence in a court environment and perpetrators attempting to weaponise those processes.

Currently, police officers often spend considerable time applying for DVOs, preparing affidavits, and attending court hearings for order applications. This process can be lengthy and resource-intensive, diverting officers from other critical duties. The standalone offence eliminates this administrative burden, allowing police to focus on investigating DFV incidents, gathering evidence, and supporting victims. This translates to quicker response times, increased proactive policing, and more efficient use of police resources.

What is particularly troubling is QPS is having to prioritise DFV calls for service against other DFV calls for service. At present, in some police districts, a large number of DFV calls for service go unanswered for up to a week. By streamlining the administrative processes around DFV, police would be able to attend all DFV calls for service promptly, and in most cases in a real time capacity immediately following the call for assistance being received.

Similarly, the courts will experience a reduction in workload associated with processing DVO applications. With the standalone offence in place, cases can proceed directly to prosecution, eliminating the need for separate court hearings dedicated solely to obtaining protective orders. This streamlines court processes, reduces backlogs, and frees up court time to focus on the criminal aspects of DFV cases, ensuring swifter justice for victims and holding perpetrators accountable more efficiently. It means police prosecutors will have more time to prepare for trials and sentencing hearings, in turn providing better service and protection to victim survivors.

Furthermore, the elimination of the DVO application process removes a potential barrier for victims seeking justice. The current system can be daunting and time-consuming, potentially discouraging some victims from pursuing legal action. The standalone offence simplifies the process, making it easier for victims to access the justice system and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. This not only saves time but also empowers victims and promotes a more victim-centric approach to addressing domestic violence.

Priority 2: Appoint a Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence.

Priority Area 2 reinforces the QPU's contention that initial frontline police responses must solely focus on the immediate protection of victim survivors and then be supported by specialist services as part of a whole of system response. That's why the QPU strongly advocates for an individual to be responsible to inform Government and:

- provide advice to the government on issues affecting DFV;
- work collaboratively with the DFV Peak and other stakeholders to optimise DFV prevention and responses;
- securing and allocating funding to DFV services; and
- foster the DFV sector's participation in policy and legislative processes.

Ideally this individual should be the Minister with responsibility for the DFV portfolio. However, it is recognised Ministers have many responsibilities and DFV is an extremely complex issue. As such consideration should be given to supporting the Minister through a DFV Commissioner, or a Deputy Commissioner within the Victim's Commissioner's Office.

The QPS has an Assistant Commissioner for its Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Command and DFV Prevention has been a specified discrete Ministerial portfolio responsibility for successive governments. However, it is essential Queensland has an individual dedicated to DFV, to provide a single focus point and high-level direction in the State's effort to eliminate all forms of domestic and family violence and abuse.

Notably, this was also a recommendation made by Ms Betty Taylor, Chief Executive Officer of the Red Rose Foundation, in a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Police Responses to DFV in which the Foundation called for:

....the establishment of an Office of Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Commissioner similar to the Children's Commissioner to provide external oversight, policy direction, research, and victim safety advocacy.

Ultimately, the report of the COI-DFV 'A Call for Change' recommend the establishment of a victims' commissioner, as an independent statutory officer, to assist victim-survivors of DFV and to provide oversight of police responses to DFV, supported by a deputy commissioner to lead this capability.

Of course, the precedence for dedicated Commissioners to assist governments to end gendered violence already exists in Australia.

The Commission for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, established by the Albanese Government in 2022, is tasked with promoting the objectives outlined in the National Plan to end gender-based violence.

Led by Commissioner Micaela Cronin, the Commission is an Exclusive Agency established under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). It is an independent agency assisting to ensure national coordination and reduce fragmentation to improve outcomes.

In 2023, the NSW Government prioritised women's safety by becoming the first state or territory in Australia to have a stand-alone Women's Safety Commissioner. The QPU envisages the creation of a similar position in Queensland, that is independent of line agencies and reports direct to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. The Queensland Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence should be a statutory appointment and the appointee should have experience working in the DFV sector and should not be recruited from the QPS or another line agency.

In NSW, the Women's Safety Commissioner assists in sharpening the government's focus on primary prevention and early intervention, with specific responsibilities, including:

- Providing leadership and oversight of whole-of-government policy and programs on domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Monitoring implementation of strategies and initiatives and providing oversight of specialist and mainstream service systems responsible for responding to domestic, family and sexual violence and harassment.
- Raising awareness and promote education and public engagement to deliver improved women's safety outcomes.
- Fostering collaboration and coordination between government and community and give victim-survivors a greater voice.

The NSW Women's Safety Commissioner is supported by the Office of the Women's Safety Commissioner in the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

On 13 April 2024, the Government announced the Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) as the State's new peak body for the Domestic and Family Violence (DFV)

sector. QCOSS has since been overseeing the development of the DFV sector into an independent stand-alone peak body. The QPU understands that this project is scheduled over 2 – 3 years. This activity should be fast-tracked under the direction of the proposed new Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence.

Relevantly, in her findings on inquests into the deaths of Miss Yunupinu, Ngeygo Ragurrrk, Kumarn Rubuntja and Kumanjayi Haaywood, delivered on 25 November 2024, Northern Territory (NT) Coroner, Elisabeth Armitage, recommended (Recommendation 2) that the NT Government establish a peak body for DFSV with the aim of providing a coordinated response to DFV. This further validates the urgency of the work underway by QCOSS to establish a 'DFV Peak' in Queensland as well as the need for a dedicated Queensland Commissioner for Domestic and Family Violence.

The QPU also recognises that the *Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act 2024* established a Victims' Commissioner in Queensland, in line with Recommendation 78 of the Commission of Inquiry into QPS Response to Domestic and Family Violence report 'A Call for Change'. The current Victims' Commissioner for Queensland is Ms Beck O'Connor, former CEO of DV Connect and a co-convenor of the Queensland Domestic Violence Service Network.

Currently, the functions of the Victims' Commissioner are—

- a) to identify and review systemic issues relating to victims; and
- b) to conduct research into matters affecting victims, including particular cohorts of victims; and
- c) to consult in relation to matters relating to victims, including a person's experience as a victim and their experience in the criminal justice system; and
- d) to deal with complaints about alleged contraventions of the victims charter; and
- e) to publish information in relation to the criminal justice system; and
- f) to promote the victims charter and rights of victims and to advocate on behalf of victims by making recommendations and providing advice, training, information or other help to government and non-government entities; and
- g) to provide advice to the Minister on issues affecting victims and the promotion of victims' rights, including making recommendations about improvements to

government policy, practices, procedures and systems to support the rights of victims; and

- h) to monitor the implementation of recommendations made by the commissioner under this Act; and
- i) to perform any other function given to the commissioner under this Act or another Act.

Additionally, the Victims' Commissioner has the power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done in performing the commissioner's functions under *Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Act* or another Act; and may engage appropriately qualified persons to give advice to the commissioner relevant to the commissioner's functions.

The Commission of Inquiry into QPS Response to Domestic and Family Violence (COI-DFV) recommended (Recommendation 78):

The Queensland Government establish a victims' commissioner as an independent statutory officer in the terms of Recommendation 18 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Hear her voice: Report Two (2022). The victims' commissioner have, at a minimum, a function of:

- *assisting individual victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, including in relation to complaints about poor police responses to domestic and family violence; and*
- *identifying systemic trends and issues relating to police responses to domestic and family violence.*

The victims' commissioner have a deputy commissioner to lead this capability.

The former Queensland Labor Government established the position of Victim's Commissioner but stopped short of appointing a deputy commissioner with a specific DFV role and responsibilities as envisaged in *A Call for Change*.

A significant part of this person's portfolio should be ensuring the DFV sector is properly resourced to provide not only support to victims and their children, but also timely intervention and rehabilitative strategies for perpetrators and educational processes to eliminate the prospect of DFV.

The QPU fully supports existing programs which involve High Risk Teams, the placement of DFV sector professionals in police stations to provide advice and support, and co-responder models. The QPU believes these current programs are essential to addressing, and eventually eradicating DFV. It is only through the intervention of professionals, rather than police, the necessary support, education and intervention will be achieved. To this end, the QPU believes these programs should be rolled out to all 24 hour police stations and major police establishments and resourced sufficiently to allow DFV sector professionals to provide a 24 hour response. Similarly, such resources should be made available were practical to all other stations, even if it is through the use of remote conferencing technology.

Priority Area 3: Immediately allocate administrative responsibility for Part 4 of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* to the Police Minister followed by a full review and re-write of the Act.

The DFVPA is currently administered by the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence through the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (the DFSDSCS). Part 4 of the DFVPA sets out a range of police functions and powers in relation to DFV.

This administrative arrangement means the Police Minister and the Queensland Police Service do not have legislative control of the role of police in this challenging and high demand environment. Legislative proposals relating to Part 4 of the DFVPA are required to be taken to the Queensland Cabinet, and ultimately through the Legislative Assembly, by Minister Camm as the responsible Minister.

As an alternative to a Machinery of Government change in this regard, the QPU would welcome a commitment from both Ministers to working collaboratively on DFV and taking forward any QPS proposals to Cabinet jointly where police are impacted.

In the 12 years since the commencement of the DFVPA in 2012, it has been amended to varying extents on 18 separate occasions creating a patchwork of policy approaches in response to various reviews and inquiries.

In Victoria the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Management (MARAM) Framework has been established with the *Family Violence Protection Act* to create the system architecture and accountability mechanisms required to establish a system-wide approach to and shared responsibility for family violence risk assessment and management. This is the type of approach the QPU suggests is required in Queensland and another reason to embark on a comprehensive review and rewrite of the DVFPA.

Such review should involve all stakeholders, to enable a whole of system approach to make our DFV laws contemporary as well as addressing administrative burdens that may reduce the effectiveness of protective action taken by police to support victims of DFV.

Barriers to streamlining administrative processes also exist outside the QPS's direct control, such as processes required under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012* including, for example, in relation to service of Protection Order applications.

At a hearing, Assistant Commissioner Codd provided an example where police officers in rural and regional Queensland might have to drive several hours to serve a document on a respondent and, if they are not present, police would need to undertake that task again at a later stage.

Both the QPS and the QPUE have submitted that there could be a range of benefits associated with legislative change:

- To allow for the electronic service of DFV documents, although the QPS submitted that this would only be appropriate where the respondent is in the physical presence of the police officer and consents to the electronic service of the document.
- To allow electronic signatures on documents filed with courts electronically.
- So that a PPN could be used as an application to vary a domestic and family violence order.
- To expand the availability and use of video recorded statements in Protection Order proceedings to remove the requirement for police to complete affidavits for an aggrieved person.

It is not possible for the QPS to achieve legislative reform on its own. It requires government commitment and endorsement by other departments who may have other competing priorities. Assistant Commissioner Codd reported that while there had been attempts by the QPS in the past to engage with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to obtain legislative reform on the more time-consuming aspects of service delivery for police these attempts have largely been unsuccessful.

All of these submissions have merit and are likely to result in streamlined processes without compromising the quality of QPS responses to domestic and family violence. The Commission encourages the Queensland Government to engage with the QPS to consider how such streamlining can be put into effect. (*A Call for Change*, page 131).

Priority Area 4: Permit Body Worn Camera video as evidence in chief in DFV proceedings.

A QPS - Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) co-led pilot to trial the use of video recorded statements, taken by trained police officers from victim survivors of DFV offences within the Gold Coast and Ipswich Districts concluded in September 2023, and was evaluated by the University of Queensland.

The evaluation concluded that it was premature to assess many of the expected outcomes and a longer monitoring period was required. The QPS identified during the trial that there are time savings in taking a Video Recorded Evidence (VRE) over that of the traditional witness statement as well as an increase in the number of guilty pleas associated with the framework. The evaluation recommended further monitoring on the basis no VRE matter went to trial. The QPU agrees with the QPS's own assessment that this is a success as no victim was exposed to the traumatising effect of having to attend court.

The video recorded statements can be used as an alternative to oral evidence-in-chief within the Magistrates Courts.

The aim of the VRE framework is to;

- Reduce victim trauma by lowering the number of times they re-tell their story;
- Enable the court to see the emotional impact of the offending on the victim close in time to the event;
- Improves evidence-gathering and the strength of the prosecution's case;
- Reduces the time taken by police officers to prepare evidence for a matter.

The Commissioner of Inquiry into Police Responses to Domestic and Family Violence (COI-DFV) recommended (Recommendation 21) *Within 12 months, the Queensland Government provide, by necessary legislative amendment, that the video recorded evidence trial be expanded across the state, pending a positive evaluation of the trial.*

As noted in the final report of the COI-DFV "The potential extension of the Video Recorded Evidence trial recognises the need to lessen the trauma and disadvantage experienced by victim-survivors during the court process, elevating their rights of recognition and equality before the law (s 15 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*)". Recommendation 21 (and 22) of the COI-DFV are aimed at streamlining administrative processes around domestic and family violence applications and Police Protection Notices. The final report of the COI-DFV noted the current processes are unnecessarily time consuming and repetitive, adding that

“simplifying the administrative processes will allow police more time to respond to and investigate domestic and family violence, elevating the human rights of victim-survivors”.

The Commission received submissions from frontline officers which spoke positively of the benefits of the use of video recorded evidence. Submissions received from domestic and family violence services also supported, in principle, the use of video recorded evidence, with informed consent from victim-survivors. (*A Call for Change*, page 131)

The QPU is aware the QPS has an ‘in-principle’ agreement to scope an expanded VRE Program across 5 additional trial sites – Coolangatta, Logan, Townsville, Cairns and Mt Isa.

The QPU believes that body worn camera evidence is an accurate record of what happened (in a DFV occurrence) and that a modern criminal justice system should be using technology to ensure that more perpetrators are held criminally responsible for their actions. For these reasons the QPU strongly recommends that there is an immediate and justifiable need to roll-out of the of body worn camera footage as evidence in chief for DFV proceedings statewide, as soon as possible.

The benefits of VRE for police include:

- Increased processing efficiency and time savings;
- Improved contemporaneous evidence gathering;
- No written or typed statements required; and
- Increase in successful DFV investigations finalised.

Further consideration should be given to repealing the current framework and implement an arrangement consistent with the video recorded evidence statements in section 93A of the *Evidence Act 1977*. The *Evidence Act 1997* framework includes safeguards (sections 93AA, 93AB and 93AC) and is a well-established process within the criminal justice system (introduced as of 1989), having been exposed to significant judicial oversight as well as legislative review and amendments.

Priority Area 5: Trial rapid video responses to DFV.

Rapid Video Response (RVR) has been successfully trialled in various United Kingdom (UK) police jurisdictions and the QPU advocates that Queensland should follow suit.

RVR is a virtual policing response available to victims of domestic abuse. Victims receive the same service as they would if an officer attended in-person, but without any delay. This service involves:

- the reporting of any crime;
- completion of a risk assessment;
- receiving safeguarding advice; and
- investigative steps needed to advance the case

Under the UK model, RVR is only eligible for:

- mid-level domestic abuse victims (category two 'priority response', category three 'scheduled response' or above);
- those over the age of 18 years old;
- cases where the perpetrator is no longer present or at the scene with the victim; and
- those who have a stable internet connection and sufficient phone battery.

UK police report that the initiative has enhanced victim engagement and satisfaction. A trial by the Kent Police demonstrated RVRs effectiveness, reducing response times for high-priority family violence cases from a mean average of 32 hours 49 minutes to just three minutes.

The Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) has closely followed the development of RVR. ANZPAA recently hosted an online forum to discuss the key learnings and insights from the RVR trials.

In Kent, the RVR program uses 'warranted' police officers to conduct immediate video responses to high-priority and appointment-graded family violence calls, aiming to improve victim experience and safety, streamline the initial response process and expedite investigations. The program replicates what frontline officers do, but with a digital operating model to improve the victim's journey. The victim receives the same service as if an officer attends in person but without the delay.

The Kent Police pilot trial showed improvement in satisfaction for female victims of intimate family violence rising from 78 to 89%, a 50% increase in the number of arrests and prevention of 25% call backs into the force control and incident room.

A key element of the program is that it is victim led. Eligible callers are directed to an RVR script reader who explains the process, allowing the victim to opt into the service. If they consent, a link to a live video call is sent through 'GoodSAM', an online platform. Callers can still request an in-person visit anytime during the call and no specialised technology is required. Also, data charges are waived by UK phone companies, making the service accessible and equitable.

RVR enables police to respond intuitively to victims, improving their overall satisfaction and engagement with police. Wraparound support services are activated more efficiently, as partner agencies like Victim Support receive referrals within hours of the initial call.

For Dorset Police, an outcome of their pilot trial was an increased resourcing capacity for local policing, allowing them to serve more victims of crime. An added benefit of this initiative has been the opportunity for officers unable to perform frontline duties to still play an active role by supporting the online service. The trial programs have emphasised the crucial role of family violence specialists in RVR, along with the need for targeted officer training to achieve the safest outcomes for victims.

During the pilot phase, RVR was also applied to various crime types, demonstrating its potential for broader expansion. Building on the original blueprint, the program is now set to expand its use beyond the initial pilot scope across the UK.

With family, domestic, and sexual violence representing major health and welfare issues in Australia (where 1 in 6 women experience physical or sexual violence), there is a strong opportunity for Australian and New Zealand police forces to adopt insights.

Priority Area 6: Safety Hubs, Improved Information Sharing and Collaboration.

Priority Area 6 calls for the establishment **one stop shops/safety hubs and improved information sharing and collaboration** across the DFV 'system'. This priority area has been included late in the development of the QPU Blueprint in response to feedback garnered through extensive consultation with stakeholders.

Improved outcomes for DFV victims hinge on all participants in the DFV system working collaboratively. While progress has been made in Queensland thanks to the findings and recommendations of various taskforces and inquiries the QPU has learned, through consultation, opportunities remain to build on the foundations now in place.

For example, there are elements of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) developed in Victoria in response to their Royal Commission into Family Violence that could be adapted to Queensland. In particular, the Child Information Sharing Scheme which enables authorised organisations and services to share information to promote the wellbeing or safety of children and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme which also enables authorised organisations and services to share information to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk to children and adults are worthy of consideration in Queensland.

The MARAM Framework can be used by all services that come into contact with individuals and families experiencing family violence. The Framework aims to establish a system-wide shared understanding of family violence. MARAM covers all aspects of service delivery from early identification, screening, risk assessment and management, to safety planning, collaborative practice, stabilisation and recovery.

The MARAM Framework has been established with the *Family Violence Protection Act* in Victoria to create the system architecture and accountability mechanisms required to establish a system-wide approach to and shared responsibility for family violence risk assessment and management. This has been achieved by incorporating the Framework and accompanying principles and pillars into law, regulation, policy and by providing supporting materials and practice guides.

Picking up on the need for better information sharing, the **DFV Perpetrator Visibility Project**, for which a proof of concept has been developed in partnership by Microsoft, Griffith University, the Queensland Police Service, Domestic Violence Action Centre and DVConnect, identifies there is a data capability gap in the domestic and family

violence space that could be bridged by automating information sharing across disparate government and non-government systems.

This innovative proposal combines government, specialist non-government services and the corporate sector in developing an information exchange platform to securely exchange data as per Part 5A of the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act* to improve responses for those at risk of serious harm from domestic and family violence

The project aims to build and trial a proof of concept to:

- provide a more wholistic view of individual cases;
- enable government departments and DFV service providers to make more informed decisions to protect victim-survivors;
- maximise joint capabilities to prevent crime and enhance community safety through collaborative partnerships with government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups;
- enhance understanding and specialist capability in identifying perpetrators and ensuring they are held to account;
- identify persons most in need of protection; and
- reduce risk of cross orders

The existing gap for agencies is undertaking an investigation or review including a risk assessment based on information from a single data source (QPRIME – QPS, DVConnect systems etc.). According to project documentation, access to information held by DFV support agencies would advance a holistic investigation and risk assessment leading to enhanced outcomes and protection for victim survivors and holding perpetrators to account.

The QPU has been advised the proof of concept would enable officers or specialist workers to access a system and identify if agencies hold relevant information. Through a simple flag/indicator, the system will identify if another agency has DFV information regarding the individual and the date of the last contact. Using the legislative framework under Part 5A of the DFVPA, the information would enable an agency to make application to request the data custodian to share DFV information in accordance with the DFVPA and in line with current practice.

One stop shops/safety hubs are also a feature of the response to DFV in Victoria through The Orange Door service. The Orange Door network aims to be accessible, safe and welcoming, providing quick and simple access to support for:

- adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence
- families who need support with the care and wellbeing of children and young people
- perpetrators of family violence.

It brings services together as a partnership so that individuals and families don't have to go to multiple services or to retell their story multiple times to have their needs met.

The Orange Door network can connect people to a range of services that provide ongoing safety and wellbeing supports, including:

- risk and needs assessment
- safety planning
- crisis support.

Perpetrator accountability is also a strong focus. The Orange Door network engages perpetrators and works with the system to hold them accountable for their actions and changing their behaviour. The QPU considers this to be a vital part of the overall approach to driving down DFV occurrence in Queensland.

In Queensland, Beyond DV has established recovery centres known as Hope Hubs. The Crisafulli Government has already recognised the value of this model and committed funding for the establishment of additional Hope Hubs as part of its Government Election Commitments. Support provided at Hope Hub recovery centres includes peer support morning teas, DV counselling, group therapy, legal support, housing advocacy, financial counselling, job readiness activities, career mentoring, training and employment opportunities.

Consideration could also be given to leveraging the existing network of Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCC)s to house DFV support services. Medicare UCCs are located across Australia in existing general practice settings, community health centres and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. They are open early and late every day of the year.

The QPU advocates further consideration of one stop shops in Queensland, including the potential to leverage existing services and infrastructure such as Medicare UCCs and Hope Hubs.

Consultation List

Stakeholder	Date	Details
QCOSS.	04/12/2024	Letter.
	17/12/2024	Personal meeting, West End.
	21/01/2025	Email.
Queensland Police Service	10/12/2024	Email (A/C DFVVC).
	10/01/2025	Email (Commissioner).
	21/01/2025	Email (CoS, A/C DFVVC, E/D P&P).
	Ongoing	Various individual officers.
Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Council.	10/12/2024	Letter.
	18/12/2024	Personal meeting, Brisbane.
	21/01/2025	Email.
Premier & Minister for Veterans.	31/10/2024	Letter.
	12/12/2024	Letter.
	19/12/2024	Letter.
	17/01/2025	Personal meeting, Mt Isa
	21/01/2025	Email.
Minister for Police & Emergency Services.	12/12/2024	Letter.
	19/12/2024	Letter.
	15/01/2025	Teleconference.
	21/01/2025	Email.
Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.	12/12/2024	Letter.
	15/01/2025	Personal meeting, Brisbane (Min. Purdie via Teleconference).
	21/01/2025	Email.
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice.	12/12/2024	Letter.
	21/01/2025	Email
Micah Projects (Brisbane Domestic Violence Service).	20/12/2024	Letter.
	21/01/2025	Email.
	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting
	17/02/2025	Personal meeting, Brisbane.

Stakeholder	Date	Details
DV Connect.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025	Letter. Email.
Domestic Violence Prevention Centre, Gold Coast.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 04/02/2025 25/02/2025	Letter. Email. Teams Meeting. Teams Meeting.
Centre for Women.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 23/01/2025 04/02/2025	Letter. Email. Personal meeting, Brisbane. Teams Meeting.
Domestic Violence Action Centre.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 04/02/2025	Letter. Email. Teams Meeting.
North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 04/02/2025	Letter. Email. Teams Meeting.
Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service.	20/12/2024 13/01/2025 21/01/2025	Letter. Personal meeting, Cairns. Email.
Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service.	20/12/2024 13/01/2025 21/01/2025 04/02/2025	Letter. Personal Meeting, Cairns. Email. Teams Meeting.
Mayor, Cairns Regional Council.	09/01/2025	Email.
Mayor, Mackay Regional Council.	09/01/2025	Email.
Shadow Minister for Child Safety, Communities and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 03/03/2025	Letter. Email. Teams Meeting.

Stakeholder	Date	Details
Shadow Attorney-General, Shadow Minister for Justice, Shadow Minister for Housing , Homelessness & Home Ownership.	20/12/2024 08/01/2025 21/01/2025	Letter. Personal Meeting, Brisbane. Email.
Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Women	28/01/2025 18/03/2025	Letter Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Jonty Bush MP Member for Cooper	18/03/2025	Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Mick De Brenni MP Member for Springwood	20/03/2025	Personal Meeting, Rochedale South.
Shadow Minister for Police and Crime Prevention, Shadow Minister for Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Sport.	20/12/2024 21/01/2025 18/02/2025	Letter. Email. Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Red Rose Foundation	10/01/2025 21/01/2025	Letter. Email.
Dr Brian Sullivan, SICURA Domestic Violence Intervention and Training.	19/02/2025	Email.
Hon. Steven Miles MP Leader of the Opposition	21/01/2025 24/01/2025	Letter. Personal meeting, Brisbane.
Qld Victims' Commissioner	21/01/2025 06/02/2025	Letter. Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Women's Safety Commissioner (NSW)	21/01/2025 31/01/2025	Email. Personal meeting, Sydney.
Mark Ryan MP, Member for Morayfield	28/01/2025 18/02/2025	Letter. Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Torchlight Foundation (NSW)	28/01/2025	Email.
Police Association of NSW	31/01/2025	Personal meeting, Sydney.
Assistant Minister for Social Services & Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence (Cwlth)	03/02/2025	Letter.
Small Steps for Hannah Foundation	03/02/2025 24/02/2025	Letter. Personal meeting, Brisbane.

Stakeholder	Date	Details
Centre Against Domestic Abuse (CADA)	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Centrecare	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Gympie DFV Service Community Action Group	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Qld Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research, Central Queensland University	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Gladstone Women's Health	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Edon Place Domestic and Family Violence Centre.	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Lifeline (Darling Downs & Southwest Qld).	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
54 Reasons	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
Youth & Family Service (YFS) (Logan)	04/02/2025	Teams Meeting.
DV Lived Experience Group	12/02/2025	Personal Meeting with Victim Survivors, Brisbane.
Beyond DV	04/02/2025 21/02/2025	Letter. Teams Meeting.
Dr Leigh Gassner, Gassner Consulting	20/02/2025 24/02/2025	Email. Teams Meeting.
Hearts of Purple	28/02/2025	Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Michelle Faye, Victim Survivor	28/02/2025	Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Kelly Wilkinson Foundation	28/02/2025	Personal Meeting, Brisbane.
Prime Minister's Office	14/02/2025 28/02/2025	Letter. Teams Meeting.
Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence Commissioner	05/03/2025	Teams Meeting.
Women's Legal Service Qld	27/02/2025 05/03/2025	Letter. Teams Meeting.
Qld Sexual Assault Network	27/02/2025	Email.
Friends with Dignity	18/03/2025	Teams Meeting.
Simone O'Brien, Victim Survivor	13/03/2025 24/03/2025	Teams Meeting Personal Meeting, Brisbane



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GRADUATION DAY FEBRUARY

BY DARREN CURTIS

THE GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR INTAKE 5/2024 ON FEBRUARY 27, 2025 FOR THE TOWNSVILLE ACADEMY COULD BE THE LAST HELD AT THE MURRAY MULTI-SPORT COMPLEX IN ANNANDALE WITH CONSIDERATION TO MOVE FUTURE EVENTS TO THE GROUNDS OF JEZZINE BARRACKS ON THE KISSING POINT HEADLAND.

55 new Constables were sworn in after starting their training on June 17, 2024 but before graduation the entire intake had already been deployed across Townsville assisting during the City's flood emergency.



Graduation ceremony at the Murray Multi-sport Complex

Traditional Custodian Sam Savage conducted a welcome to country ceremony and during his presentation thanked the recruits and Townsville police community for their assistance during the flooding. Mr Savage said 'the leadership, resources and guidance police provide during disasters makes our community feel safer. The way you all react in an emergency response and now through the recovery phase is a credit to your training and uniform.'

Sam Savage representing the traditions of the Bindal people thanked the new Constables for their hard work during the Townsville floods



Police Commissioner Steve Gollschewski said

“WE REFLECT OUR COMMUNITY, OUR RANKS ARE AS DIVERSE AS THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE. WE DON’T POLICE THESE NEIGHBOURHOODS WE WORK WITH THEM, WE POLICE THE PEOPLE WHO OPT TO GO OUTSIDE THE NORMAL ACCEPTABLE LAWS OF SOCIETY. QUEENSLAND IS A GREAT STATE AND YOU ARE PART OF A GREAT ORGANISATION.”



Commissioner Gollschewski spoke of the diversity of police recruits.



The graduation was the last official function for Commissioner Gollschewski before taking extended personal leave.

It wasn't known at the time but the Townsville Graduation ceremony would be the last official function for the Commissioner before taking unexpected and extended leave for personal reasons however some of his words of advice to the new Constables, took on more relevance on reflection. Mr Gollschewski said "As a 45 year veteran I can tell you, you will have many terrible days but also some wonderful experiences. We are at the pointy end of community safety, we respond to crisis, we help victims

and we hold perpetrators to account. From your very first shifts, the very first time you walk out of the station door or step out of a police vehicle always remember the community will be looking to you to lead."

During the ceremony it was a battle for some of the new Constables to contain their emotions as the significance of the moment became a reality.



Constable Zachary Howe was struck by the emotion when his police officer brother Mitchell presented him with his badge.

Constable Zachary Howe had tears in his eyes as his brother, a serving police officer in New South Wales handed him his badge. Zach and his two brothers all now hold frontline first response jobs, younger brother Alex is a New South Wales Firefighter. Constable Howe said “my older brother has been a police officer for 13 years and it was an honour and a privilege for me to receive it from him. For 15 years Queensland has been my home when I moved here with the army. By joining the police here it’s my way of giving back to the State that has given me so much, unfortunately I will however remain a blues supporter.” Zach’s first year will be at Atherton while his partner continues in her role with the Defence Force in Townsville.



The Blair family celebrate the graduation of Constable Zachary Blair.

Separation from family during the training phase for Constable Moera Blair made her more determined to reach graduation. It was like a pressure valve release for the mum of four when her family launched into a haka at the completion of the formalities. Constable Blair said “its been a tough eight and half months away from my family in Cairns. The haka today was beautiful and really emotional, it shows how proud my family and friends are of what I have achieved here. I’m really glad to be going home to Cairns now and get out on patrol.”



The Blair family initiate a traditional haka to acknowledge their pride in Constable Moera Blair graduating.



Constable Moera Blair responds to the Blair family haka.

It was the continuation of a 100 year family tradition for Constable Jesse Kinbacher taking the oath. Great Grandfather Officer Edward Kinbacher, Grandfather Sergeant John Kinbacher, Uncle Senior Sergeant Ed Kinbacher and dad Sergeant Andrew Kinbacher have formed an incredible family legacy and while the generations have changed some things in policing have remained the same. Grandfather John said “my wisdom to Jesse was to always be a good person, do your job with pride and always respect the public.

"Seeing Jesse today receive his badge from my son brought me to tears. It’s an amazing thing we’ve got this length of service, mind you four weeks after I arrived at the police depot in Brisbane I was sworn in and on the job. I guess all the training these days reflects how difficult the job is now.”



The Kinbacher police family Ed, John, Jesse and Andrew.

Constable James said he's proud of the heritage and he appreciates the significance, "this is a major milestone for me. I've always wanted to be a police officer and the road to get here hasn't been a straight one. I've been around police all my life and I'm now posted to a town where my father has been working for the past twenty years. I will make my own mark in this job but Dad and his father have always told me about respect for my peers, colleagues and the community but also self-respect and stay connected to family and friends."

Police Union President Shane Prior presented the QPU sponsored Dux Award to Constable Madeline Kyle a former police admin assistant who applied to become a sworn officer and leave the security of home in Brisbane.



Constable Madeline Kyle presented with the QPU Dux Award presented by QPU President Shane Prior.

Constable Kyle said "I hoped to come to the Academy in Townsville as it is an intimate learning environment with just 55 of us here rather than the massive numbers at Oxley. I felt it would be a better place for me to learn. This is my first move out of home and I'm going to Mt Isa, a place I've never been before. I'm expecting a new culture and lifestyle but I intend to immerse myself in everything the town has to offer. I'll be living in the barracks and everyone has heard about the 'half star' accommodation there but I know the QPU is there for any support for the challenges we face in the job."



Constable Madeline Kyle is excited at the prospect of rural and remote service in the States North.

Mr Prior praised Madeline's attitude and her preparedness to exit from her comfort zone and head out on a QPS adventure. Mr Prior said "this could deliver the greatest experience and opportunities possible for a police officer and is a tribute to the independent intelligent thinking people we have joining our profession. The bulk of this graduating class are being assigned to Cairns, Townsville, Mt Isa, Ingham, Gladstone and the Whitsundays.

"All communities that need a boost to the frontline and Regions where we have very talented Regional Reps for the QPU. I encourage anyone of our members to reach out if you have an issue you think the QPU may be able to assist with. It could be an industrial matter, a problem with police housing or a bit of help to keep you mentally healthy and at work, call because we can often resolve matters and keep senior managers honest."

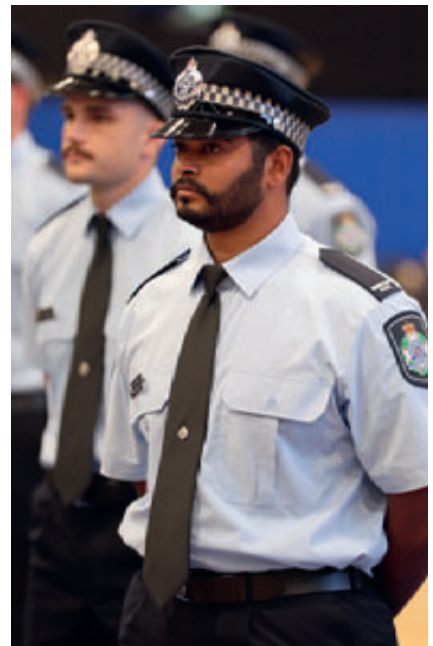


Constable Samantha Menteith was presented with the Domestic and Family Violence Training Award.





Constable Nicole Fay was presented with the Community Service Award sponsored by Police Citizens Youth Clubs.



The Dan Stiller Memorial Award for Traffic studies excellence was presented to Constable David Ferre.



Tony Ross from QBank presented Constable Moera Blair with the Achievement Award.





The Sondra Lena Memorial Award for Physical Skills was presented to Constable Zachary Sharrad.



Constable Belinda Warrell was presented with the Operational Skills Award.





Assistant Commissioner Kev Guteridge presented the Leadership Award on behalf of the Queensland Commissioned Officers Union to Constable William Plant





Commissioner Steve Gollschewski presents the Commissioner's Award for all round excellence to Constable David Ferre



THE INFORMATION PRIVACY ACT AND THE RISKS OF UNLAWFUL DISCLOSURE FOR POLICE OFFICERS

Provided by Calvin Gnech, Legal Practice Director Gnech & Associates



GNECH AND ASSOCIATES
LAWYERS

The Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) ("IP Act") is a critical piece of legislation designed to protect personal information held by Queensland Government agencies.

It establishes a framework for the responsible collection, storage, use, and disclosure of personal information, ensuring that individuals' privacy is respected and safeguarded. This article explores the Information Privacy Principles ("IPPs") enshrined in the IP Act, the potential dangers of police officers' personal information being released to suspects and criminals, and recent cases highlighting these real risks.

INFORMATION PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

The IP Act sets out 11 Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) which govern how personal information should be handled by Queensland Government agencies, including the Queensland Police Service ("QPS"). These principles are designed to ensure that personal information is:

1. **Collected for a lawful purpose:** Agencies must only collect personal information necessary for their functions or activities.
2. **Collected by lawful and fair means:** Information must be collected in a manner that is lawful and fair, without intruding unreasonably on the individual's personal affairs.
3. **Collected with awareness:** Individuals should be informed about the purpose of collection and how their information will be used.
4. **Stored securely:** Agencies must take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss, and unauthorised access.

5. **Accessible and correctable:** Individuals have the right to access their personal information and request corrections if it is inaccurate, incomplete, or out-of-date.
6. **Used and disclosed appropriately:** Personal information should only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected, unless consent is obtained or a legal exception applies.
7. **Accurate and up-to-date:** Agencies must ensure that personal information is accurate, complete, and up-to-date before using it.
8. **Handled with transparency:** Agencies should be open about their information handling practices and provide individuals with access to their privacy policies.
9. **Protected from unauthorised access:** Agencies must implement safeguards to protect personal information from unauthorised access, use, or disclosure.
10. **Retained only as necessary:** Personal information should only be retained for as long as it is needed for the purpose for which it was collected.
11. **Handled with accountability:** Agencies are accountable for complying with the IPPs and must take steps to ensure their staff are aware of and comply with these principles.

RISKS OF UNLAWFUL DISCLOSURE OF POLICE OFFICERS' PERSONAL INFORMATION

The unlawful disclosure of police officers' personal information poses significant risks to their safety and well-being.

When personal information such as telephone numbers, addresses, and dates of birth are released to suspects or criminals, it can lead to:

- **Threats to personal safety:** Police officers and their families may face threats, harassment, or violence from individuals seeking retribution or intimidation.
- **Psychological distress:** The fear of being targeted can cause significant anxiety and stress for officers and their families, impacting their mental health and quality of life.
- **Compromised investigations:** The release of personal information can undermine ongoing investigations and compromise the integrity of the justice system if police officers are conducting their duties whilst navigating compromising external factors.

RECENT CASES OF UNLAWFUL DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION OF POLICE OFFICERS

Recently, Gnech and Associates have been successful on three occasions litigating breaches of the IP Act where private information of police officers has been unlawfully released to criminals due to mismanagement of that information by the QPS. This unfortunately is a real issue.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The QPS's actions in these cases represent a failure to comply with the IPPs, particularly the principles related to secure storage, appropriate use and disclosure, and protection from unauthorised access.

The unlawful disclosure of personal information to a known criminal is a serious breach that compromises the safety of the affected officers and their families. The officers and their families experienced significant distress and anxiety as a result of the breach.

FINANCIAL REPARATIONS AND LEGAL RECOURSE

In response to the breach, the affected officers sought financial reparations for non-economic loss, including pain and suffering caused by the significant anxiety and distress experienced.

Non-economic loss reflects the well-founded fear for an officer's safety if a known criminal obtains their personal information.

The officers could also claim actual economic loss for instance if they had to change their telephone numbers, added security or worst-case scenario sell their home and move.

The potential damages payable if the matter were to be arbitrated could be significant.

DAMAGES LIKELY TO BE PAYABLE

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal ("QCAT") has the discretion to award compensation of up to \$100,000 for each breach of the IP Act.

In determining the appropriate amount of damages, QCAT would consider precedents such as the Administrative Appeals Tribunal ("AAT") decision in *Rummery and the Federal Privacy Commissioner and Anor*, which outlines principles for compensation awards in privacy breach cases. These principles include:

- Awards should be restrained but not minimal.
- Compensation should be assessed based on the complainant's reaction, not the perceived reaction of the community.
- Aggravated damages may be awarded in appropriate cases.

COMPARABLE DECISIONS

In the realm of privacy breaches, particularly concerning the unlawful disclosure of personal information, several comparable cases provide insight into the legal principles and compensation frameworks applied by tribunals and courts.

These cases highlight the nuances in assessing damages for non-economic loss, such as distress and anxiety, and the circumstances under which aggravated damages may be awarded.

DK AND TELSTRA CORPORATION LIMITED

In the case of DK and Telstra Corporation Limited, the complainant, a Federal Court judge, experienced a breach of privacy when Telstra published his personal information, including his name, address, and telephone number, in both the online and hard copy versions of the White Pages directory.

This publication occurred without the complainant's consent and posed a potential risk to his safety due to the nature of his judicial role.

The Privacy Commissioner awarded the complainant \$18,000 for non-economic loss, recognising the stress and anxiety caused by the breach. The Commissioner noted that the fear for the complainant's physical safety, although not based on a specific threat, was well-founded given his public position.

RUMMERY AND THE FEDERAL PRIVACY COMMISSIONER AND ANOR

The Rummery case further elucidates the principles applied in awarding compensation for privacy breaches. The AAT emphasised that compensation should be measured with restraint but not be

minimal, and that the principles of tort law could guide the assessment, although the statutory language ultimately governs.

The AAT also highlighted that compensation should reflect the complainant's personal reaction to the breach, rather than a hypothetical reasonable person's response.

This case underscores the importance of considering the subjective impact of a privacy breach on the individual affected.

HALL V A & A SHEIBAN PTY LTD

In *Hall v A & A Sheiban Pty Ltd*, the Federal Court addressed the assessment of damages under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), which parallels the approach in privacy breach cases.

Justice Wilcox noted that damages for non-economic impacts, such as injury to feelings and distress, are not easily quantifiable. However, failing to award compensation for these impacts would result in injustice.

This principle is relevant in privacy cases, where the emotional and psychological effects of a breach can be profound and warrant recognition through financial compensation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRENT CASES

These cases collectively illustrate the legal framework for addressing privacy breaches and the factors considered in awarding damages.

They highlight the need for a tailored approach that considers the specific circumstances of each case, including the nature of the breach, the role of the complainant, and the subjective impact on their well-being. In cases involving the unlawful disclosure of police officers' personal information, these precedents suggest that not insubstantial compensation may be warranted, particularly where there is a direct and identifiable risk to the officer's safety and that of their family.

CONCLUSION

The IP Act plays a crucial role in protecting personal information and ensuring that government agencies, including the QPS, handle such information

responsibly. The unlawful disclosure of police officers' personal information poses significant risks to their safety and well-being, highlighting the need for stringent compliance with the IPPs.

If you believe your personal information has been unlawfully disclosed, it is essential to seek legal advice to understand your rights and potential remedies. Timely advice should be sought because a **twelve month** time limitation does apply to commence legal action.

For assistance with potential breaches of the IP Act, please contact Gnech and Associates Lawyers on (07) 3558 1040 or at enquiries@gnechlawsyrs.com to discuss your circumstances.

Our experienced legal team can provide guidance and representation to help you navigate the complexities of privacy law and seek appropriate redress.



Calvin Gnech, Practice Director Gnech & Associates

Gnech and Associates, under the leadership of Legal Practice Director Calvin Gnech, have established themselves as preeminent experts in the fields of criminal, disciplinary, and administrative law, particularly as these areas pertain to police officers. With a deep understanding of the unique challenges and legal intricacies faced by law enforcement personnel, Calvin and his dedicated team have consistently provided robust legal support and representation to police officers and their families. Their expertise extends to navigating complex legal frameworks and advocating for the rights and interests of police officers in various legal contexts.

Over the years, Gnech and Associates have cultivated a strong partnership with the Queensland Police Union, offering comprehensive legal services that address the diverse needs of its members. This collaboration has involved representing officers in disciplinary proceedings, advising on administrative matters, and defending against criminal charges. The firm's commitment to excellence and its tailored approach to each case have earned them a reputation for reliability and effective advocacy, making them a trusted ally for police officers seeking legal guidance and support.

Police Health



HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM CHANGES



PEACE OF MIND IS GOLD: WHY HEALTH INSURANCE MATTERS

Every April there's a focus on private health insurance options, and where to get the best value for money following annual premium increases.

2025 has been no different, especially since many Australians have battled with the rising cost of living in recent years.

With so many police families insured with Police Health, the only health fund run by and for Police, we're taking a closer look at how they compare.

Gold cover is the highest level of hospital cover available in Australia, with no exclusions or restrictions. Working in policing is enough to make anyone realise that the unexpected can be right around the corner, and so having the peace of mind of an all-inclusive health insurance policy is worth its weight in gold.

And when you compare Police Health's Gold Hospital to other similar Gold level hospital cover (see adjacent page), you see why it's worth looking deeper than the headline.

It's also important to note that Police Health's Gold Hospital cover has no excess, which can save you up to \$750* if you go to claim, compared to most other Gold options on the market. Having no excess on your policy helps you manage your costs when you need it most and is an important factor to consider when comparing cover and the price of cover.

Police Health members also consistently report that the support and service they receive exceed expectations. Fast claims processing,

comprehensive hospital cover, and generous Extras benefits ensure members feel supported when they need it most.

Police Health has been available in Queensland since 2001, making it the second state after South Australia to offer this dedicated health cover. Over the years, this has helped build a strong connection with Queensland police, ensuring they have access to health insurance that meets their unique needs.

Take it from one of the long-term Queensland members, who has seen firsthand the value of being with Police Health.

“Police Health looked after my wife and I really well on all occasions without any question. All claims for hospital and extras are dealt with expeditiously. I would rate Police Health as the BEST health fund there is...”

Another Queensland member with many years of experience shared that sentiment.

“Amazing health insurer – Have been a member of Police Health for nearly 20 years and I wouldn’t dream of changing insurers. Rebates for extras are amazing (always gets comments from providers how much we get back), manual invoices via the app are promptly paid, hospital costs are almost always 100% covered and the service team are always so helpful when I call. I don’t have a bad word to say. Thanks, Police Health.”

Police Health has also continued to be competitive when you compare their premium increase to the industry average increase.

Because Police Health only offer gold/top level cover options, to get a true comparison of their increase compared to other funds it’s important to look closely at the average increases in Gold cover specifically.

An investigation by consumer group Choice found that insurers had increased the price of their gold tier policies by more than 45%, on average, over a four-year period to Feb 2024 through a practice known as phoenixing .

In contrast, the average increase of Police Health's gold cover over the same four year period was 8%.

Now celebrating its 90th anniversary, Police Health proudly serves over 100,000 members across Australia, continuing to provide exceptional care and support to its growing member base.

For those working in high-pressure roles across Queensland, knowing their health fund truly has their back allows them to focus on what matters—protecting and serving their communities.

Members, from frontline officers to their families, deserve a health fund that works as hard as they do.

Police Health is proud of the reputation it has built through decades of looking after those who serve Queensland.

Whether it’s through outstanding customer service, extensive health cover, or making claims simple and stress-free, the commitment to members never wavers.

For those in the Queensland police community, Police Health welcomes them to join the thousands of members who trust it. Because when it comes to quality health insurance, peace of mind is gold.

**All benefits may be subject to Waiting Periods, Limits and other conditions. Visit our website for more information.*



COVER LIKE NO OTHER

GOLD HOSPITAL QUOTE COMPARISONS*

QUEENSLAND / FAMILY / MONTHLY / 1 APRIL 2025



Your cover for a family in QLD

\$397.87

Effective 01/04/2025 the price will be \$439.58



Medibank Gold Protect

from \$603.88* / month

Hospital excess \$500



YOUR TOTAL COVER

Gold Hospital Elevate from \$569.54* / monthly

From 1 April, \$612.67 per month

Hospital excess amount \$500 \$750



Gold Comprehensive Hospital

Our premium hospital cover for total peace of mind.

\$637.50 After 1 April

	Police Health	Medibank	HBF	Bupa
Price from 1 April 2025	\$439.58 [#]	\$603.88	\$612.67 [#]	\$637.50
Excess	Nil	\$500	\$500	\$500

*Comparisons are based on a family policy in Queensland with Base Tier Government Rebate applied; no Lifetime Health Cover Loading; no aged-based discounts. [#]Price includes direct debit discount. Pricing sourced from Police Health, Medibank, HBF and Bupa websites as at 20th March 2025.

DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS

Written by Claire McGee and Jaimee-Lee Jessop, Senior Associates Gilshenan & Luton Legal Practice



Across Queensland, there has been an increasing level of frustration from the Courts regarding the late disclosure of materials by the prosecution.

This has led to police officers being directed to attend court, submit affidavits explaining any delays, and in some cases, face contempt of court allegations.

It is crucial to understand your disclosure obligations and the significance of providing timely disclosures to prevent criticism.

MAGISTRATES COURT PRACTICE DIRECTIONS

Practice directions are procedural guidelines issued by magistrates in the Magistrates Courts.

It is important to ensure that you are familiar with the relevant disclosure timeframes in accordance with each of the practice directions.

Below is a helpful table to assist you:

Practice Direction No. 1 of 2025: Summary proceedings for Domestic Violence offence	35 days from a not guilty plea being indicated.
Practice Direction No. 11 of 2024: Sexual Assault Offence Callover (Brisbane Magistrates Court cases only)	At the first mention in the callover directions concerning the setting of timetables including the ordering of Briefs of Evidence will be considered. Note: there is no set timeframe for the disclosure of the Brief of Evidence. It is open to the Magistrate.
Practice Direction No. 10 of 2010: Times, and Procedures from	Committal Committal for sentence = 14 days for partial brief. Committal for trial = 35 days for a Full Brief of Evidence.
Callovers to Conclusion in Criminal Matters	Summary The Full Brief of evidence must be made available for collection within 35 days of the matter being set for trial and in any event at least 14 days prior to the date set for the hearing of the trial.

What is a partial brief of evidence?

In accordance with Practice Direction No. 10 of 2010, a ‘partial brief’ means a brief which contains copies of signed statements of the prosecution witnesses who will provide the “substantial evidence” in the matter and copies of exhibits of substantial evidence for the purpose of a committal for sentence. If requested by defence, and if the material is in the possession of police, the material should be provided within 14 days of that request.

SECTION 590AJ DISCLOSURE REQUESTS

Section 590AJ of the Criminal Code 1899 (‘the Code’) imposes specific disclosure requirements on the prosecution that must be adhered to upon request by defence. This type of disclosure request is in addition to the standard full brief of evidence.

As a police officer involved in the investigation or prosecution of a case, it is critical to understand and comply with these legal obligations. Section 590AJ of the Code outlines the materials that the prosecution

must disclose to the defence upon request, and failing to comply with these requirements can result in serious legal consequences.

These disclosures include:

- (a) particulars if a proposed witness for the prosecution is, or may be, an affected child; and
- (b) a copy of the criminal history of a proposed witness for the prosecution in the possession of the prosecution; and
- (c) a copy or notice of any thing in the possession of the prosecution that may reasonably be considered to be adverse to the reliability or credibility of a proposed witness for the prosecution; and
- (d) notice of any thing in the possession of the prosecution that may tend to raise an issue about the competence of a proposed witness for the prosecution to give evidence in the proceeding; and
- (e) a copy of any statement of any person relevant to the proceeding and in the possession of the prosecution but on which the prosecution does not intend to rely at the proceeding; and
- (f) a copy or notice of any other thing in the possession of the prosecution that is relevant to the proceeding but on which the prosecution does not intend to rely at the proceeding.

Example—

a transcript of a recorded statement

- (3) If the prosecution gives notice of a thing under subsection (2) that is not original evidence, the prosecution must advise the accused person that the thing may be viewed on request by the accused person at a stated place.

As a police officer, it's essential to recognise that while responding to section 590AJ disclosure requests can be a frustrating and time-consuming task, it is an obligation that must be complied with under the law.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY AND COMPLETE DISCLOSURE

It is crucial to understand that timely and complete disclosure is a key part of ensuring a fair and just legal process. The disclosure obligations outlined in the relevant practice directions and section 590AJ are designed to ensure fairness to an accused person, giving them the opportunity to properly and fully understand the prosecution's case against them.

What to do if you cannot comply with the timeframes

In accordance with Practice Direction No. 10 of 2010:

Where the investigating officer and/or his or her superior officer subsequently becomes aware that it is impracticable to have the certain specified statements and/or exhibits, or the Partial or Full Brief of Evidence completed (as the case may be) ... the DPP officer or Police Prosecutor who has conduct of the matter and the Committals Brief Manager (if applicable) should be notified forthwith. The prosecution will notify the defence of the problem upon becoming aware of the same.

Note: the DPP officer or police prosecutor should be advised as soon as you become aware that disclosure will be delayed. You should also provide an ETA on when the material will be available.

What is a reasonable explanation for disclosure being impractical

Delays in obtaining analyst certificates from external agencies (e.g. drug analysis, DNA, sex assault kits, etc) ✓

Delays in obtaining TELCO or bank records following issuing of production notices ✓

Delays in obtaining witness statements (including police officers) from interstate or overseas witnesses ✓

Delays in obtaining QPS officer statements where the officer is on, or has just commenced extended leave (>4weeks) ✓

Delays awaiting forensic analysis of digital/electronic devices ✓

Delays awaiting digital enhancement of evidence (by Forensic Service Group) ✓

What is an unreasonable explanation for disclosure being impractical

Delays in compiling Brief of Evidence due to nightwork or other rostering issues, including leave (ensure your upcoming leave/unavailability is clearly indicated on the QP9 Coversheet) ✗

Delays in compiling Brief of Evidence due to workload (for large or complex Briefs of Evidence with many witnesses, contact PPC asap) ✗

Delays in obtaining officer statements from outside the District ✗

Delays in redacting BWC/CCTV (if being done locally) ✗

Delays caused by brief checking at station level ✗

What happens if you fail to comply with disclosure obligations

If there are delays in providing disclosure, you could face a direction from the Court to provide an affidavit explaining why the materials were not disclosed on time. In some cases, you may even be required to attend court to personally explain the delay.

Regardless of your scheduled shift or if you are assigned to nightwork, if the order is made, your presence as the investigating officer will be required. If you are on leave, your supervisor or Officer in Charge may be directed to attend.

In the most serious of circumstances, you could be held in contempt of court

How do you avoid being criticised or being directed to appear

It is important to:

- Commence preparation of a brief of evidence as soon as possible;
- If your brief of evidence requires input from other officers, make your input requests in an early and timely manner including follow up inquiries, and keep records of those requests in the QPrime log;
- Diarise and be conscious of court dates. For example, if you know you have not fully completed a disclosure request and the next court date is fast approaching, make follow up inquiries and outline your results with the appropriate internal police systems e.g. QPrime; and/or
- Submit any disclosure in time for prosecutors to disclose the material by the due date to the defence lawyers.

As a police officer involved in the investigation or prosecution process, it is your responsibility to ensure that all necessary materials are disclosed promptly, preventing any delays that could result in further legal issues for yourself or the case as a whole.

Finally: If you are ordered to personally appear in court for a failure to comply with court order, please contact your Union representative immediately, so that appropriate advice can be provided.

Gilshenan & Luton are top tier lawyers engaged regularly by the QPU to represent our members. They can be contacted on 07 33610222 or gnl@gnl.com.au



Jamiee-Lee Jessop in 2024 achieved her Specialist Accreditation in Criminal Law through the Queensland Law Society. Jaimee-Lee has an extensive range of experience in criminal law, from Magistrate Court sentences and bail applications to District and Supreme Court trials and Court of Appeal matters. She is also a member of the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland.)



Claire McGee is a Senior Associate who joined Gilshenan & Luton in 2015. Claire represents clients in all aspects of criminal law. In 2022, Claire gained Specialist Accreditation in Criminal Law through the Queensland Law Society. Claire acts in a diverse range of criminal matters, with particular experience in sexual offences and large-scale white-collar crime/fraud matters. Claire is also a member of the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland.)



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*Subject to Waiting Periods and other conditions. Some Dental Service Limits apply to General Dental. ^Rollover for Major Dental applies once you've completed your first 2 years membership on Extras. Other conditions may also apply, contact us for more details. Police Health Limited ABN 86 135 221 519. A registered, not-for-profit, restricted access private health insurer – first established in 1935. © Copyright.

AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

**A NUMBER OF QPU MEMBERS
HAVE BEEN RECOGNISED FOR
YEARS OF OUTSTANDING
WORK IN POLICING WITH THE
AWARDING OF THE AUSTRALIAN
POLICE MEDAL (APM) AS
PART OF THE AUSTRALIA DAY
HONOURS IN JANUARY 2025.**

The recipients are from across the Service who have devoted their careers to child abuse prevention, assisting peers exposed to psychological injury, developing and mentoring junior officers and contributing to corporate services.

QPU President Shane Prior said "I am immensely proud to congratulate our members who have been awarded the Australian National Police medal for their outstanding contributions to their peers and the communities of Queensland. These recipients have consistently demonstrated professionalism, integrity, leadership, and unwavering commitment to serving their communities. This recognition is a testament to their hard work and dedication, and they should wear this award proudly. On behalf of the people of Queensland and fellow QPU members, I commend these exceptional officers for their exemplary service."

**The following material was provided by the QPS on the award recipients.*



Detective Senior Sergeant Brett Devine commenced his service with the QPS in September 1986 and was sworn in as a police officer on in April 1987. He has served all his career as an operational police officer in Far North Queensland, serving initially as a general duties officer then the remainder of his career as an investigator in criminal investigation branches including as an officer in charge.

He is widely recognised as a mentor and supportive leader who encourages innovation by investigators under his stewardship and has been integral in

the development of junior officers in the field of criminal investigation. Detective Senior Sergeant Devine is renowned as a conscientious, committed, tenacious and meticulous investigator. He has remained committed to community safety throughout his career and has a passion for working with First Nations communities.

Detective Senior Sergeant Devine has been a frontline operational police officer his entire career. He has extensive policing experience throughout communities in the far north, including Aurukun. He commenced as an investigator in the Cairns Drug Squad in 1993 and achieved his detective's appointment in 1998 whilst he was performing duties in the Cairns Criminal Investigations Branch.

Detective Senior Sergeant Devine transferred to Thursday Island in the Torres Strait where he enhanced his investigative career and become well regarded across several state and federal government agencies for his practical approach to policing and his extraordinary ability to achieve shared outcomes in a dynamic operating environment. Detective Senior Sergeant Devine has been the officer in charge of Mareeba Crime Investigations Branch since 2006.



Senior Sergeant Jacinta Pannowitz commenced with QPS in August 1993 and was sworn in as a police officer in 1998. She has served as an operational officer all her career,

having served as a general duties officer, a criminal investigator, shift supervisor and as the officer in charge of the Loganholme Police Station. She has undertaken specialised projects including the South Eastern Region Wellbeing project and is currently relieving as the acting inspector of the Internal Witness Support Unit due to her significant work in supporting officers exposed to psychological injury and/or discipline processes.

Since the age of 17, she has assisted the Logan community in various capacities ranging from civilian administrative functions within the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB), frontline response as a sworn officer and specialist investigator within the CIB, becoming the first female officer to attain the role of Officer in Charge of a station within Logan District.

Senior Sergeant Pannowitz has faced significant challenges, including a serious on duty traffic incident in which she had to re-learn how to walk. She has been tasked with investigating and solving multiple homicides and attending a fatal house fire in which multiple adults and children perished.

Most notably, affecting both her professional and personal life, she tragically attended the domestic homicide of a family member in 2019 which has had a profound and lasting impact on her as a daughter, mother, wife and police officer.

She has role modelled resilience, compassion, empathy and professionalism and has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to victims of domestic and family violence within the community whilst fundraising and advocating for victim-survivors and their children in her own time. Senior Sergeant Pannowitz is a committed mentor to others, is highly regarded by her colleagues and has actively contributed to influencing cultural change within the QPS with respect to coercive control.



Senior Sergeant Constance Steel joined QPS in May 1988 and was sworn in as a police officer in December 1988. She has served as an operational police officer all her career, including as a general duties officer, support officer, shift supervisor and is currently a regional strategy and performance officer in the Northern Region.

As a leader in modern law enforcement, she embodies the personal and professional qualities sought after in today's policing landscape. Her extensive experience in operational policing is complemented by her consistently high performance in corporate and support roles within the QPS. Senior Sergeant Steel is well-regarded in the Northern Region and across the broader QPS for her knowledge, professionalism, and willingness to provide support and assistance. She consistently demonstrates dedication, skill and expertise in operational policing practices, organisational improvement, and professional development.

Her effectiveness in key positions spans operational, intelligence, corporate and support roles. Senior Sergeant Steel is known for her unwavering commitment to providing top-tier support at all levels of the service. Her strategic approach to organisational challenges underscores her dedication to policing the Queensland community.



GRADUATION DAY

JANUARY

BY DARREN CURTIS

**THE FIRST
GRADUATION FOR
2025 WAS HELD ON
JANUARY 30 AT THE
OXLEY ACADEMY
FOR INTAKE 4/2024
COMPRISING 136
NEW CONSTABLES.**

The eight and half month training course included not only theory components but practical assessments and specialist training in responding to mental health incidents along with preventing and investigating Domestic and Family Violence crime.

QPU President Shane Prior welcomed the cohort and spoke about their future work landscape will be dominated by responding to DFV calls and the QPU was working to try and improve the legislation and administrative burden that comes with each call.

Mr Prior said “the first gripe you are likely to hear when you reach your station will be about the demands of DFV and the time it takes to process an inquiry each shift. It’s timely that I remind you that it’s important you are diligent with these matters and ensure you comply with your obligations but know in the background I’m working on a set of measures that I hope will bring legislative change and at the same time allow you to get back to more proactive patrolling and responding to all types of crime not just DFV. It’s my commitment to you, I don’t want you walking into this job now you’ve graduated and thinking all you will do for the rest of your career is DFV paperwork. I want you out there busting crooks of all kinds.”

Commissioner Steve Gollschewski said “you joined the QPS because of the values you hold and I want you to maintain those values throughout your policing career. I can speak from personal experience those values will guide you through the most challenging times. Policing is not an easy path. Remember to respect each other, the community and also take care of each other. I want you to go home safely at the end of each shift.”



QPU President Shane Prior presents the Dux Award to Constable Byron Gregory.

Police Union President Shane Prior presented the QPU sponsored Dux Award to Constable Byron Gregory from squad 285 who is posted to South Brisbane District.

The ceremony also took time to pause and reflect on the loss of Constable Albert Price who was fatally stabbed during an arrest in Mackay in 1905. His family laid a wreath in his honour and were presented with the QPS Blue Heart Medal for those officers seriously injured or killed while on duty.



Relatives of Constable Albert Price receive the QPS Blue Heart Medal from Commissioner Steve Gollschewski.

**THE 136 NEW CONSTABLES ARE HEADING FOR FRONTLINE DUTIES ACROSS THE STATE.
BRISBANE REGION (30), SOUTHERN REGION (24), SOUTH EASTERN (20), NORTH COAST (19),
CENTRAL REGION (17), NORTHERN (13) AND FAR NORTHERN REGION (13)**



Constable Jake Burke was presented with the Domestic and Family Violence Training Award.



Constable Nigel Myers was presented with the Community Service Award.





Constable Mark Westerman was presented with the Sondra Lena memorial Physical Skills Award.



Constable Matthew Genero was presented with the Dan Stiller Memorial Traffic Award.





Darryl Morton from QBank presented Constable Shannon Majerovic with the Achievement Award.



Constable Phoebe Cave was presented with the Operational Skills Award.





President of the Queensland Commissioned Officer's Union Kerry Johnston presented Constable Joshua Dorron with the Leadership Award.





Commissioner Steve Gollschewski presented Constable Aaron Fitzpatrick with the Commissioner's Award.



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NZ POLICE OFFICER MURDERED

**IN THE EARLY HOURS OF
NEW YEARS DAY, NEW ZEALAND
POLICE OFFICER SENIOR
SERGEANT LYN FLEMING WAS
RUNDOWN AND KILLED WHILE
ON FOOT PATROL IN CENTRAL
NELSON, ON THE SOUTH ISLAND
OF NEW ZEALAND.**



Senior Sergeant Lyn Fleming received mortal injuries after being struck by a high speed car at 2am January 1, 2025.

The 62 year old was with two other officers when a vehicle was driven at speed into them. Senior Sergeant Lyn Fleming died from her injuries later in hospital, another colleague Senior Sergeant Adam Ramsay was also seriously injured and a third officer was concussed.

The driver of the vehicle was tasered and arrested at the scene. He faces eight charges including murder and attempted murder. New Zealand Police Commissioner Richard

Chambers, labelled it a “tragic, senseless, unprovoked” attack.

Senior Sergeant Fleming is the 34th New Zealand Police Officer to be killed in the line of duty and the first female. She was married to another officer and they have two adult children.

QPU North Coast Regional Rep Jake Lacy represented Queensland at the funeral along with delegates from all Australian States, Territories and the Police Federation of Australia.



Australian Police Unions and Associations attended the funeral service honouring the life of a fallen colleague.

**THE DAY BEFORE THE FUNERAL
POLICE ACROSS NEW ZEALAND
PAUSED IN SILENCE IN A
CO-ORDINATED CEREMONY
OUTSIDE THEIR STATIONS
ACROSS THE COUNTRY AS A
MARK OF RESPECT.**



More than one thousand of officer Fleming's family, friends, and colleagues gathered at the Trafalgar Centre in Nelson to farewell the 62-year-old.

At the conclusion of her funeral, officer Fleming's coffin was carried from the venue by her team -

Sergeant Adrian Cupit, Sergeant Nigel Orpwood, Sergeant Craig Clayworth, Sergeant Tony Esera, Sergeant Alana Kane, Sergeant Tim Wincer and Senior Sergeant Byron Reid - who all directly reported to Fleming, a much loved and respected colleague.



Once outside of the venue, Senior Sergeant Fleming's colleagues performed a moving version of the police haka- Ko Te Uru Pounamu to show their respect and honour the bravery and dignity of their friend.

Mr Lacy said "it has been an honour to attend this ceremony on behalf of all QPU members. When tragedy like this occurs it is felt by the entire police family, there's no borders or countries when we lose a cop because we all joined this profession to serve and protect our communities. I hope Senior Sergeant Fleming's family know we share their pain. We also want the police who were injured in the same incident to recover and hopefully return to the job, they are needed and what they do is respected. The traditional haka performed by Lyn's colleagues was a powerful display of respect and remembrance honouring her dedication and sacrifice. It will stay with me for many years."

A brass plaque bearing Senior Sergeant Lyn Flemings name, rank and the incident that claimed her life will be placed at the New Zealand Police College as a reminder to all police about the dangers of the profession and if the worst happens you will never be forgotten.



Sometimes our protectors
need protecting...

*for a fair and just outcome
become a member*



QUEENSLAND POLICE UNION OF EMPLOYEES

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HOPE ISLAND CHIROPRACTIC
WITH DR ZACH CURTIS

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QUEENSLAND RETIRED POLICE ASSOCIATION

NEWS



MESSAGE FROM GREG EARLY, STATE PRESIDENT

This is the first QRPA contribution from the Queensland Retired Police Association for 2025. The last contribution was contained in the Summer 2024 edition and can easily be downloaded from the website journal@qpu.asn.au.

Message to Commissioner Steve Gollschewski, Patron of the QRPA: On behalf of all members of the QRPA, I sent a message to the Commissioner wishing him a speedy diagnosis and treatment of his medical condition. I also thanked him for what he has done for our Association and what other Officers have done and continue to do with his blessing.

Funeral Planning Request Form: This form is available for **voluntary completion** by our members for recording at a member's Branch or by the State Secretary. If a form has been completed before a member's passing, there is less stress on the next of kin. The seventeen Branches have done and continue to urge members to complete one of these forms.

Petition to the Government by the Police Union: All members have been asked to consider signing the petition which is entitled 'Make Domestic Violence a Crime Every Time'.

NEW MEMBERS

Former Constable Russell Colin Bentley, Hervey Bay, former Detective Sergeant Michael Andrew Gordon, Near North Coast, former QPS Watchhouse Officer Ravi Gunaratnam, Redlands, former Sergeant Graham Arthur Hedges, Redlands, former Constable Elizabeth Kolanek, Ipswich, former Senior Constable Mark L'Barrow, Redlands, former Inspector Craig Lyndon Rolls, State, former Sergeant Michael Joseph Stokes, Townsville, former Assistant Commissioner Gayle Hogan, Sunshine Coast and former Sergeant William Renton, Sunshine Coast.

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Marcia Mary Takaeaki, Mackay-Whitsunday, partner of member Steven Gillis.

QRPA CERTIFICATES

VETERAN MEMBER

(75 years & 10 years continuous financial membership.)

Dennis Raymond Bauer, Hervey Bay, Robert James Dunkinson, State, Graham Clyde Foan, Southern Downs and Granite Belt, Walter Paul Siganto, Gold Coast, Wayne Lawrence Barnes, Logan Beenleigh, Graham John Paterson, State, Ronald Edward Vincent, State, Anthony Alan Benson, State, Malcolm Michele, State and Bruce Michael Selwood, Near North Coast, Allan Alexander Nicol, Redlands

VETERAN ASSOCIATE MEMBER

(75 years & 10 years continuous financial membership)

Beverley Ann Millard, Gold Coast, Catherine Roberts, Ipswich, Barbara Smith, Townsville, Susan Teresa Sorenson, Gold Coast, Una Anne Thompson, Redlands and Maureen Estelle Love, Southern Downs and Granite Belt.

SENIOR MEMBER

(65 years & 10 years continuous financial membership)

George Edward Allard and Bruce Maxwell Thomas, both Southern Downs and Granite Belt, Robert Edmund Bennett, State, Paul Douglas Jones, Gold Coast, Stephen Charles Kenny, Darling Downs, Allan John McSweeney, Logan Beenleigh, Wendy Elaine de Groot, Sunshine Coast, Denis Sidney Sycz, Ipswich, Barry James O'Sullivan, State, Ian James Parsons, Bundaberg, Rod Frain, Gympie, Christopher Noel Loane, State and Christopher Phillip Sidey, Bundaberg.

SENIOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER

(65 years & 10 years continuous financial membership)

Pamela Joan Holcombe, Gold Coast, Anne Johnston, Townsville, Lesley Sutton, Far North Queensland and Karen Anne Winn, Gladstone.

90 and Over

Myles John Burns, State, 93 on 12 December 2024, Percival James Fleming, State, 90 on 8 December 2024, Noel Ernest Cain, State, 91 on 10 January 2025, Frederick Harold Collins, Bundaberg, 95 on 4 January 2025, Elton

Cal Mitchelson, Redlands, 91 on 9 January 2025, Donald Teague, Sunshine Coast, 90 on 13 January 2025, Graham Francis Burgemeister, 91 on 12 February 2025, Maureen Cummins, Logan Beenleigh, 90 on 1 February 2025, Douglas William Jones, Gladstone, 94 on 6 February 2025, Charles Grant Lumsden, State, 94 on 21 February 2025, George Raymond Paff, Logan Beenleigh, 93 on 16 February 2025, Barbara Merle Zupp, Townsville, 91 on 11 February 2025, Robert James Dunkinson, State, 92 on 7 March 2025, Spencer Moray Hale, State, 99 on 31 March 2025 and Margaret Hooper, Townsville, 91 on 29 March 2025.

OBITUARIES – MAY THEY REST IN PEACE MEMBERS

Veteran Member and former QPS Senior Constable Peter Frederick Hilder passed on 30-10-2024 age 86 years, Associate Member Eva Joyce Orford, 93 years (passing date unknown), Veteran Associate Member Cynthia Florence Guteridge passed 02-10-2024 age 93 years, Associate Member Graham Lawrence Swadling passed 13-12-2024 age 76 years, Member and former QPS Senior Constable Peter John Hintz passed 20-12-2024 age 63 years, Associate Member Diane June Janas passed 05-01-2025 age 77 years, Veteran Member and former QPS Sergeant Herman Alida Joseph Van Cauwenburg passed 07-01-2025 age 81 years, Veteran Member and former QPS Senior Constable Thomas Graham Burgess passed 31-01-2025 age 93 years. Veteran Member and former QPS Sergeant second class Colin David King passed on 10-02-2025 age 91 years, Veteran Member and former Senior Sergeant Ian George Fischer passed on 07-02-2025 age 78 years, Member and former Inspector Frederick George Maynard passed on 12-02-2025 age 92 years, Veteran Member, former Senior Constable Dudley Vernon Laird passed on 13-02-2025 age 87 years and Veteran Member and former Constable First Class Robert Joseph Hagan passed on 26-02-2025 age 85 years.

FAMILY

Marie Lane wife of QRPA Veteran Member Walter George Lane passed 28-11-2024 age 93 years and Carolyn Bremner wife of QRPA Senior Member Jeffrey Bremner passed as a result of a tragic accident 31-12-2024 age 71 years.

Non-members: Former QPS Officer Alan William Ross passed away 05-11-2024 age 85 years, former QPS Administration Officer Kerrie Leanne Tregear passed away 24-11-2024, former Associate Member Eva Joyce Orford who passed away on an unknown date, Robert Blucher former QPS Sergeant passed 13-12-2024, Colin Robert Cochran former QPS officer passed 19-12-2024, Patrick Thomas Fleming former QPS officer passed December 2024 age 70 years, Maureen Aspinall nee Chantler (PW128) and former QPS officer passed 07-01-2025 age 72 years, Peter Alexander Hall former QPS officer passed

11-01-2025 age 66 years and former QPS officer Irene Darlington passed on 23-02-2025 age 64 years.

Serving Members: Inspector Seiavoush Akhavan passed 30-12-2024 and Senior Sergeant Gerard Michael Simpfordorfer passed 04-02-2025.

AROUND THE BRANCHES:

BUNDABERG

Meeting held on 29 November 2024. Welfare: Mary Waugh advised that Graham Hancock seems to be doing OK, Adrian Mergard is still “battling on” and both John Reid and Fred Collins are doing well. President John Lewis thanked Mary for the reports and her dedication to the welfare of the members. Members brought to the meeting a variety of great prizes for the Christmas luncheon raffle. Alan Edgerton announced that the Branch Bowls Team had four consecutive wins recently. Mary raised the need for early preparation for the inaugural Granville Pearce Bowls Day. President John Lewis welcomed and introduced member Kevin Darch who had recently transferred from the Sunshine Coast Branch. He gave members a brief summary of his service. Mary spoke about her foray into yet another welfare area - a volunteer through Impact Community Services which sees her attending a local Nursing Home where she visits and engages with residents, especially those who are not fortunate enough to receive regular visitors.



President John Lewis presenting Beth Edgerton with her Veteran Associate Member Certificate

Meeting held on 24 January 2025. Welfare by Mary Waugh: Fred Collins recently celebrated his 95th birthday. Chris Sidey attended the meeting and advised of his progress. Adrian Mergard attended the meeting and let members know how he was going. Rod Strong had a shoulder operation and advised the meeting things were going well. Keith Lipp was home from hospital recuperating. Cheryl Hayes was not going too well at that time and Lou Pukallus reported he had some back surgery recently. Although the numbers attending the annual luncheon were down, everyone had a good time. Probably a first – the bar tab was not exhausted on the day. President John Lewis briefed the meeting on a meeting of the Bowls Day Sub-Committee. As always, the benefactor of the day will be the Queensland Police Legacy Scheme. (This year will be the inaugural Granville Pearce Bowls Day). **Meeting held on 28 February 2025.**

Welfare: Jack Field is doing OK. Grannie Pearce Bowls Day. Sponsors letters have been distributed. President John Lewis reported he intended to visit a number of businesses in the retail area in a couple of weeks seeking sponsors. Lou Pukallus gave a great presentation regarding his trip to the UK and Europe last Christmas. Next meeting: 28 March 2025.

(Secretary – Rowan Bond – 0408 286 483)



President John Lewis presenting Adrian Mergard with his Senior Member Certificate.

GOLD COAST

Meeting held on 3 December 2024. President Mike Sparke presented a Veteran Member Certificate to Roger Collins and QRPA Veteran Associate Member Certificate to Denise Sullivan. Social Secretary Denise Sullivan presented Veteran Associate Member Certificates to Jan Chalker and Robyn Stokes. **Meeting held on 4 February 2025.** Vice President Gerry McKendry stood in for President Mike Sparke who is suffering from serious sciatica and other medical issues which are affecting his mobility. Secretary David Manfield, at the time of the meeting, was in St Andrews War Memorial Hospital being treated for three leaking heart valves. He tendered his resignation as Secretary in August last year but continued on until a replacement was found. Due to his medical condition, his resignation was effective from 4 February 2025. Consideration is being given to giving David an appropriate plaque in appreciation for performing his duties as Secretary in a very professional and dedicated way. Treasurer Doug Lawlor will act as Secretary until a viable candidate for the position can be identified prior to or at the AGM this year. The possible appointment of an Assistant Secretary will be considered at the AGM.

Welfare: Betty Barratt suffered a serious fall at her home over the Christmas period resulting in a fractured skull and being admitted to the Gold Coast Private Hospital. Her son and David Jeffries are in the process of organising a nursing home for her in the Brisbane area and she will remain in hospital until being relocated. Col and Denise Sullivan have undertaken recent visits. Veteran Member John Wilson had been admitted to Tweed Hospital suffering from dementia and after a fall at home. Des Sorensen advised Keith Woodbridge is due to undergo a procedure in respect of his gall bladder. Col Sullivan advised Greg Bignell is undergoing a series of medical issues at present and which have resulted him being

unable to drive. Col Sullivan also advised Des Thorton is due to have a hernia operation shortly. Zoe Lawlor also advised member Wayne Doss was having a number of medical issues and had spent some time in hospital in Brisbane. The application to join the QRPA by Mark Keogh was recommended for approval. He was at the meeting and provided a brief background of his career in both New South Wales and Queensland. **Meeting held on 4 March 2025.** Former President Russell Robertson chaired the meeting in the absence of the President and Vice President. The Acting Chairman presented Greg and Vicky Bannister with Bob Bannister's QPS Certificate of Service. (Bob had passed late last year. However, there wasn't an opportunity to present the family with the Certificate of Service at the time due to no funeral service being conducted as per Bob's wishes). Welfare: Len Reynolds has had several falls recently and has been in and out of hospital. Keith Woodbridge had an emergency operation as his gall bladder had decayed, broke into



Recipients of their Veteran Associate Member Certificates – Jan Chalker, Denise Sullivan and Robyn Stokes.

four pieces and badly infected his stomach. Apparently he died but was brought back to life. Going OK now but unsteady on his feet. David Stonely was hospitalised due to cutting his leg to the bone. Unfortunately John Wilson has transitioned into the high care unit of Bolton Clarke Galleon Gardens, Currumbin Waters. (The unit provides specialist care to dementia patients). Betty Barratt has transitioned to Duhig Village, Holland Park. Footnote on the bottom of the minutes of the 4 March 2025 meeting – *Minutes completed under Torch Light and on battery lap top by Acting Secretary pending arrival of cyclone Alfred.* Next meeting: 1 April 2025.

(Acting Secretary Doug Lawlor 0414 351 257)



President Mike Sparke presenting Roger Collins with his Veteran Member Certificate.

GYMPIE

Meeting held at the Sports Club Tin Can Bay on

Wednesday 5 February 2025. North Coast Region Police Chaplain, Matthew Govan, was advised he would be most welcome to attend a future meeting of the Branch. Welfare Officer: Norm Breen mentioned that Glen and Marge Durre have recovered and are now both well. Brian Johannessen is quite unwell and his wife Glenda is in a care facility. Mention was made of the Christmas luncheon held at the Gympie Sports Club being a great success. Lyn Bunkum and Desley Matthews are arranging a morning melodies/lunch outing at the RSL Club. Mention was made of another luncheon being arranged at Woollahra Homestead, Traveston, in March. (Secretary – Wayne McDonald, 0406 728 070).



Members and guests attending the Christmas luncheon held at the Gympie Sports Club.

LOGAN-BEENLEIGH

Meeting held on 27 November 2024. Plaques were presented to Jim Wagner, Greg Spies and Gerry Stevens for their support of the monthly raffles by regularly providing or arranging items to be raffled. Secretary Kevin Francis spoke about smoke alarm configurations and requirements for rental and owner homes. Branch President Colin Thorne provided an update on the health and wellbeing of a number of Branch members. **Meeting held on 22 January 2025.** Vice President Kay Halford gave a special welcome to Eileen Riley on her return and Allan McSweeney who had not been able to attend meetings in recent times. Allan McSweeney was presented with his Senior Member Certificate by Vice President Kay Halford. There was no guest speaker and members were asked if they would like to share any stories from Christmas. Two members spoke about fishing experiences with family over the period with one having a photo to prove his catch. The other one spoke about how his son never used to go fishing but now goes as often as he can. Some possible outings: Bare foot bowls day, Tamborine Mountain day trip with the Gallery Walk and Tamborine Bowls Club as a lunch location. Overall the members were very satisfied with the Christmas lunch gathering. Wayne Barnes has put together a collection of police related photographs and is happy to show them at one of the days where there is no guest speaker. Lee Thorne provided members with

a welfare update concerning members. **Meeting held on 26 February 2025.** Len Trendall and Ian Quinn were welcomed to the meeting by President Colin Thorne. Due to a number of reasons they had not been able to attend a meeting for some time. Special guests were Logan Mayor Jon Raven and Trish Henigan, former QPS officer and ADF member who later indicated she wanted to join the QRPA. Special charity event: John Ellsworth advised that he wished to cut off his prized pony tail and to mark the occasion he would donate \$1000 to the Qld Cancer Council in memory of his recently passed wife and associate member Dale. Lee Thorne volunteered to undertake the hairdressing duties. Logan Mayor Jon Raven spoke about his plans for Logan City including long term planning, the Logan identity, innovative business opportunities to increase employment, tech



Allan McSweeney being presented with his Senior Member Certificate by Vice President Kay Halford.

companies, defence contracts and business development. The Mayor also spoke of difficulties dealing with the other levels of government and developers. In conclusion he answered several questions from the floor and gave frank and clear responses. He advised the members that he would like to attend on another meeting and provide a briefing concerning the budget. It was resolved that \$500 from the Legacy account be donated to Qld Police Legacy. September Branch Activity: An outing to Mount Tamborine in September is being investigated. It was good to see John Ellsworth, Jeff Bremner and Eileen Riley at the meeting. Rod and Elaine Bloss are now using wheelie-walkers. Rod has had keyhole surgery on his knee but has now picked up an infection in the wound which is being treated. A flat shoe bowling day will be held on a Thursday in May at the Beenleigh Bowls Club. Guest Tricia Henigan advised she will be submitting an application to join the QRPA. Next meeting: 26 March 2025.

(Secretary Kevin Francis 0401 668 760).



John Ellsworth having his prized pony tail cut off by Treasurer Lee Thorne.

SUNSHINE COAST

Meeting held on 28 January 2025. Unfortunately the planned guest speaker, Sergeant Mick Gardiner, EORT, cancelled due to ill health. Visitors – Paul Moskwa and Mark Battersby. Welfare report: President Richard Turpin also Welfare Officer presented his report. He said he had made attempts to contact as many members as possible who continue to suffer ill health. Some members previously reported as unwell in late 2024 were present at this meeting. Bruce Shillington advised he had a serious collision with a vehicle while riding his bike in Buderim. Bruce described it as being 'T boned' by a vehicle. He suffered 5 fractured ribs, left shoulder fracture in two places and spent some days in hospital. He was home at the time of the meeting, has plenty of attention from family and expects a long recovery. Mental Health; Prospective member Mark Battersby (Vic.) spoke briefly about his personal experience with mental health and is available to give assistance and advice. State President Greg Early presented Wendy de Groot with her Senior Member Certificate. The following members have transferred to the Branch: Paul Wilson (State) and Joanne Pitt and Howard Glass (Bundaberg). **Meeting held on 25 February 2025** at the Headland Golf Club. A new digital and battery operated PA system was trialled at the meeting and proved satisfactory. (The Club's PA system cannot be used and a separate PA system helps to block out noise created by other patrons). President and Welfare Officer Dick Turpin presented his report. Bruce Shillington's injury recovery is slow and some progress should be evident in another month. David and Lyn Betts were both briefly unwell. Dick also updated the meeting on the medical situation of a number of members who continue to suffer ill health. Next meeting: 25 March 2025. (Secretary – John Ballard – 0447 432 622)



Wendy de Groot receiving her Senior Member Certificate from State President Greg Early.

ROCKHAMPTON

Meeting held on 4 December 2024. Welfare: Associate member Rose Swadling reaffirmed that associate member Graham was very ill and the prognosis was not good. (Unfortunately Graham passed away on 13 December 2024). The sum of \$493 was raised by the multi-draw raffle at the dinner. This amount was rounded up to \$500 and has been donated to the Queensland Police Legacy Scheme. Members were advised that the QPS Chaplain Leighton Johannesen had resigned and would

be replaced by Adrian Tabone. (Leighton is a Recruit in training at the Townsville Academy). **Meeting held on 5 February 2025.** Visitors to the meeting: Retired Sergeant John Dallow and Police Chaplain Adrian Tabone. A thank you letter was received from the Queensland Police Legacy Scheme in regard to the recent donation to it by the Branch. The meeting was advised that Bruce Sanders is now eligible to be awarded the OBE (over bloody eighty) award. **Meeting held on March 2025.** Welfare: Vice President Bob Moore advised he will miss a number of monthly meetings due to wife Trudy's ongoing cancer treatment. The next BBQ will be held at Cockscrobb Retreat on 16 March 2025. (President Barry Self to be the provider). Member Jim Burton was presented with his Veteran Member Certificate by President Barry Self. Next meeting: 2 April 2025. (Secretary/Treasurer: Dennis Smith – 0408 321 416)



Jim Burton being presented with his Veteran Member Certificate by President Barry Self.

SOUTHERN DOWNS AND GRANITE BELT

Meeting held on 10 January 2025 at the Condamine Sports Club, Warwick. A letter was received from Maureen Love expressing her appreciation for flowers with respect to the passing of her husband/branch member Keith. George Allard was presented with his Senior Member Certificate by President Laurie Bell. Next meeting: 10 March 2025. (Brian Cannon – Secretary – 0476 156 968)



President Laurie Bell presenting George Allard with his Senior Member Certificate



Members attending the 10 January 2025 meeting.

MACKAY-WHITSUNDAY

With no meeting in January, twenty members and partners dined at the Mackay Surf Club with good weather, pleasant surroundings, idle chatter and delicious meals. **Meeting held on 15 February 2025.** An application to join the Association by Marcia Takaeaki was recommended for approval. Mention was made of the State Management Committee requesting a copy of the article placed in the Mackay Life News Magazine on 6 December 2024 about retired Police Officers joining the QRPA. (The article was forwarded by the SMC to the other sixteen Branches). Welfare: Barry Downs addressed the meeting and sadly advised that due to his own health issues that he was finding it difficult to continue in the role of Welfare Officer and that he wished to stand down from the position. Peter Howard agreed to continue with the role and asked for assistance from members to advise him if they are aware of illnesses or other welfare matters relating to their members. Mention was made that Norah Spreadborough was in Pioneer Valley Hospital and was quite ill at that time. Kev Burger moved a vote of thanks for Welfare Officer Barry Downs for his years of dedication and service for members of the Branch; also for his wife Thele who has always supported him. All members responded with acclamation. Next Meeting: 15 March 2025. (Secretary A. Wijtenburg 0427 230 840)

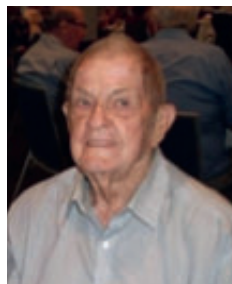
IPSWICH

Meeting held on 13 February 2025. Welfare Report by Bruce Raymond and Margie Kussrow: Bruce thanked Margie for all the work she has been doing as Assistant Welfare Officer. John and Joy Raatz have returned to good health after two years of ups and downs. Ron Lobwein is still very keen on QRPA matters but has some mobility problems. Matt Dale is still suffering from his vertigo problem and Elaine was wearing a 'moon boot'. Mark Clark is going ahead in leaps and bounds and now has four university degrees. Vince Buetel is going strong in the nursing home. Bruce touched on the Box Flat mine explosion where he officiates each year at a memorial service. Jack Paff is still remembered as being the first police officer on the scene with Len Yarrow and Bob Latter also responding to this horrific disaster and what confronted these officers. Police Widows Coordinator Di McRae is planning a Police Widows morning tea for March. The Police Womens luncheon at the Virginia Golf Course



Guest Speaker QPS Bomb Technician Sergeant Michael Gardiner.

in March: It was agreed to fund the six women associated with the Branch namely: Margie Crawford, Di Topping, Margie Kussrow, Di Hart, Di Bird and Reen McIntyre. Guest Speaker: QPS Bomb Technician Michael Gardiner – author of the book 'A Blast From the Past'. Michael again entertained the audience with an updated version of "A Blast From the Past". The presentation was extremely professional and provided an update of recent events involving the Bomb Squad. Next Meeting: 13 March 2025. (Ken Martin Secretary/Treasurer 0407 345 500)



WORDS BY CHAIRMAN KEN MORRIS:

We will miss our very good mate, Fred Maynard, who sadly passed away on 12 February 2025 in the Princess Alexandra Hospital after suffering from a stroke several days prior. Fred was a true friend

and a dedicated and professional police officer. Many of us will reminisce about working and socialising with him over the years. There are several of us who were fortunate enough to have won prizes that Fred lovingly made and donated to our Branch raffles over the years. Fred will be sadly missed.

TOWNSVILLE

Meeting held on 5 February 2025. From newsletter:

'Peter Hardy had contacted most of our Ingham members. John Lone said he was OK; unable to contact Eric Darby; spoke to Barbara Zupp for a fair while. She is still at home but all her antique furniture stored under her house has been damaged. Graeme McLeish is good. Unable to contact Fred and Laural Angus but as they have no power so their phone does not work. Graeme was going to check up on them. Margaret Hooper said she was alright. John Urquhart reported that he had contacted Barbara Zupp a couple of weeks ago before the floods and she has been in both the Townsville and Ingham Hospitals several time since November last year. She was feeling better. He had spoken to Fred and Laural Angus the same day and they are travelling alright - just suffering from 'old persons illnesses'. The usual donation to the Police Legacy Scheme was discussed. It was mentioned that the Branch sponsor Key Motors had donated \$300.00 to go towards the donation to Queensland Police Legacy. It was resolved to match the amount and make a donation of \$600.00 to the Scheme. Dave Trelour informed the meeting that on 8 February 2025 he would be attending the 50th anniversary of the commencement of his cadetship into the QPS. (One hundred and twenty five Cadets started with him – male and female). **Meeting held on 5 March 2025.** President Merv Johnston welcomed everyone to the meeting. A special welcome was given to Fred and Laural Angus, Tom Norman and Wayne Lord. **From March Newsletter:** Peter Hardy: He had been in contact with Eric Darby who had managed

to get through the recent floods; he had attempted to contact Brian Bensley but had been unsuccessful. He had been talking to Barbara Zupp. She was alright and they are currently cleaning up under her house. Welfare: John Urquhart spoke about John Cran who is currently having troubles with carpal tunnel in both hands and also his back problems have returned. The Queensland Police Legacy Scheme thanked the Branch for its donation of \$600.00. In doing this the Branch was advised that the Scheme was currently supporting 58 families consisting of 35 families of deceased Queensland Police Officers, 20 families of serving Police Officers whose spouse has died and 3 families of serving Police Officers who are suffering from a terminal illness. It is also meeting the educational expenses of 94 dependent children. Fred Angus informed the meeting that the Royal Hotel at Ingham has been sold. Member Roger Bow is the President of the Ingham RSL Club and a booking to hold the 4 June 2025 meeting there has been made. The usual morning tea at Barbara Zupp's residence will go ahead despite her brush with flood waters. Next meeting: 2 April 2025. (Secretary J. Urquhart 0407 734 497)

GLADSTONE

Meeting held on 11 December 2024 at the Calliope Central Bowls Club. Welfare Officer Mary Mackenzie presented the welfare report: Glenn Churchill had an appointment for day surgery at Rockhampton on the day of the meeting. Helen Young had been unwell with a persistent bout of flu. Doug Jones, the most senior Branch member, presented Neil Coleborn with his Veteran Member Certificate. Following the meeting, some played barefoot bowls. The blue team skippered by Chris Lette defeated the red team skippered by David Thomas 7 to 0. Trivia sheets winners were Animal Kingdom: Keith McCann 15, Leanne Richter 14, Roslyn Thomas 20 and Kevin Whicker 18. All enjoyed Christmas lunch and multi-draw raffles with all winning at least one prize. **Meeting held on 5 February 2025** at the Queens Hotel, Gladstone. Acting Welfare Officer Neil Coleborn presented the Welfare Report. Peter Vale was very ill in Gladstone Hospital. Helen advised Darryl Saw that both herself and Peter had Influenza A and were very sick with it. Helen has recovered, but Peter was still very ill. Darryl visited Peter for a short time on Friday morning 17/1/2025. Update from Helen Vale on 3/2/2025: Peter was still in hospital although he had recovered from influenza A. He is awaiting a placement in a nursing home, hopefully in Gladstone. Helen thanked members for their care and good wishes. Diane Janas's funeral service was well attended. Members spoke with Diane's family members at the wake following the service and they were appreciative of the respect shown to the family. **Meeting held on 5 March 2025.** Welfare: Darryl Saw regularly catches up with Glen Josefski and advises he is doing as well as can be expected. Peter Vale: Helen advised that Peter had recovered from his illness and was still

in hospital awaiting placement in an aged care facility. Helen has taken him out briefly for lunch and some social engagement. Members will support the Police Union's petition – QPU Blueprint for Action - to Queensland State Parliament. Sgt Mick Gardiner of QPS Explosive Ordnance Response Team (EORT) presented on his publication 'Blast From The Past' with any profit from the sales of the book going directly to the Qld Police Legacy Fund. Next meeting: 2 April 2025.

(Secretary Darryl Saw 0447 417 146)



Doug Jones presenting Neil Coleborn with his Veteran Member Certificate.



Barefoot Bowls Winners.



Barefoot Bowls Losers.



Members attending the 5 March 2025 meeting.

DARLING DOWNS

Meeting held on 12 December 2025. Welfare: Ray Briesse was absent as he was having his cancer checked. Terry Hickey's cancer had become worse and he was finding it difficult to drive in from Pittsworth. Both Bob and Judy Lehfeltdt were currently unwell. Viv Nolan at the time of the meeting had a lung infection. Malcolm Twine was having back issues and was finding it difficult to drive. John MacKay advised that Eric Cargill would appreciate a visit at the Nursing Home in Highfields. John stated that a Satin wreath valued at \$450 had been donated to the Branch by the QPS Regional Office. **Meeting held on 13 February 2025.** President John MacKay welcomed Senior Sergeant Kirsty Gleeson, Guest Speaker. Welfare: President John indicated Boyd Wilson was back in hospital receiving treatment, that John Cooper's condition had deteriorated and he gave an update on his daughter's cancer treatment. Wayne Browning said he had visited Eric Cargill a couple of times and he is doing OK. John MacKay indicated that applications for plaques had been made on behalf of Herman Von Cauenberg and Peter Hintz. John MacKay advised that Bill Brennan had received an Australia Day Award and Ray Laidlaw was to receive the Vietnam Star. Ray Briesse stated that all Vietnam Veterans were to receive a Unit citation. Guest speaker Senior Sergeant Kirsty Gleeson, Southern Region Forensic Co-ordinator, gave an interesting and informative talk regarding her duties in the Region. Steve Kenny was presented with his Senior Member Certificate by President John MacKay. Next meeting: 13 March 2025. (Secretary Mike Jordan 0438 111 423).



Steve Kenny receiving his Senior Member Certificate from President John MacKay.

NEAR NORTH COAST

Meeting held on 20 January 2025. Welfare: Allan Hawkins advised he had been in contact with Des Kelly and Earl Sanders. They are both well but Des is having difficulty walking. He now has a mobility scooter and is

getting out and about well on it. Members were advised on the health of Noel Fortescue. Maureen Warner's application for associate membership was recommended for approval. Next meeting: 17 March 2025. (Secretary – Bill Feldman 0419 659 105)

REDLANDS

The Christmas party at Hogan's Wellington Point Hotel was very well attended with Doug, Jennene and Merv the winners of the Lucky Door Prizes. Secret Santa was very well supported. It was a great event with excellent food and friendship which lasted well into the afternoon. The Christmas Party was also an opportunity to honour two of the Redlands Branch's longest serving members with Rosemary Nicol receiving her Veteran Associate Member Certificate and Past President Marty Fitzpatrick receiving his Senior Member Certificate. Their Christmas drinks were held at the Elysium Restaurant and Bar at Victoria Point. This saw a few members get together with lots of laughs and more good food and fellowship; also an opportunity to welcome a couple of new members Steve Hollands and Simon James, both of whom joined the Association after their age retirement dates in late December and early January. **Meeting held on 28 January 2025** at Cleveland RSL Club. A special welcome was given to Jason Goodwin, Vice President of the Queensland Police Legacy Scheme. New prospective members: Steve Hollands; Simon James; Graham Hedges; Steve L'Barrow and Ravi Gunaratnam were acknowledged and welcomed. All applicants were recommended for approval. Guest speaker: Jason Goodwin, Vice President, Queensland Police Legacy Scheme, spoke about the scheme and particularly what it does for families of fallen and sick officers and the changes coming with Police Legacy. **Luncheon held on 25 February 2025 at the Wynnum RSL Club.** The luncheon was held for the first time at Wynnum RSL Club. Members and guests enjoyed a great alternate drop meal. Branches represented were Van Diemen's Land, Gold Coast and Southern Downs and Granite Belt. The State Management Committee was represented by State President Greg Early and State Secretary Chris Sang. Others present were: Jason Goodwin, Vice President of the Queensland Police Legacy Scheme, Henry Pike, MP Federal member for Bowman, Ross Vasta, MP Federal member for Bonner, Russell Fields, MP State Member for Capalaba, Amanda Stocker, MP State Member for Oodgeroo, Julie Talty Redlands Deputy Mayor, Wendy Boglary, Redlands City Councillor, Paul Wilson, Director of QBank, Acting Chief Superintendent Andrew Piloto, South Brisbane District and Inspector Scott Prestidge, Patrol Group Inspector, Bayside Patrol. Vice President Mark Stewart was MC and called upon the following to speak: President Mark Stiles, State President Greg Early and QBank Director Paul Wilson. Redlands Veteran Member Elton Mitchelson spoke about his good friend of many years Sunshine Coast Veteran Member Basil Glover and his declining health. There were three

lucky door prizes and forty raffle prizes. Many of the prizes were donated by members.
(Secretary – Tina Bowen 0408 199 085).



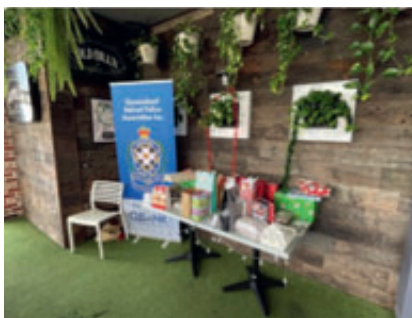
Redlands Christmas drinks at Elysium Restaurant and Bar at Victoria Point.



President Mark Stiles presenting Past President Marty Fitzpatrick with his Senior Member Certificate.



President Mark Stiles presenting Rosemary Nicol with her Veteran Associate Member Certificate.



Christmas Celebrations.



Politicians and the Executive at the 2025 luncheon.

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

They had 45 members and guests attend their Christmas meeting/luncheon. Ray and Dell Stubbins both had some health issues as well as Beryl Pocock and Dianne Moran.

Vice President John Hartwell thanked members for their support throughout the year, the Executive for their hard work, especially Brigitte in her roles, and wished everyone a safe and Happy Christmas. **Meeting/luncheon held on 28 February 2025** at the Carrington Hotel, Atherton. Thirty three members attended. Bob McLaghan was welcomed to the meeting, he having recently re-located to Mareeba from Logan-Beenleigh Branch. Funeral of State member: Ian Fischer FNQ Branch members Rolf Straatemeier and Ian Swan provided support to current serving QPS officer Sergeant Peter Fischer and the Fischer family after the family communicated their preferences for the funeral with the flag and cap, plus the reading of the ODE. Rolf shared some insights regarding Ian and he also stressed to members the importance of filling in the funeral planning request form. (Not always a nice topic to speak about but it certainly aids the family in carrying out a member's wishes). Arthur and Beryl Lynch have moved to South Australia to be closer to Beryl's family. They left on 22 February and members will certainly miss Arthur's wonderful infectious laugh. Dell and Ray Stubbins sent their best wishes to the members as did Beryl Pocock. Gloria Coogan also sent her love to the group.
(Secretary Brigitte McKaskill 0408 281 979).



Lesley Sutton receiving her Senior Associate Member Certificate from President Mal McKaskill.

HERVEY BAY

The Christmas luncheon was held on 2 December 2024 at the Clubhouse Restaurant of the Hervey Bay Golf Club. The event was well attended by members and their partners who got into the festive spirit with some interesting dress themes. The food was excellent with attendees choosing from the extensive menu. Grahame Gronow was the winner of the raffle. **Meeting held on 21 January 2025.** Guest speaker: Senior Sergeant Chris Elder, District Duty Officer (DDO) for Wide Bay who gave a very informative address to the group about the role and functions of the DDO. He outlined the impost domestic violence is having on his staff and said it was impacting heavily on less urgent police calls for service. Chris also spoke about the new body worn vest. A discussion was also had in relation to the monitoring and use of CCTV in Maryborough and Hervey Bay. Welfare: Contact has been made with Gerry Walton who wished all members a good 2025. Ted plant apologised for not attending the meeting

and said he has mobility problems at present. Denis Bauer was presented with his Veteran Member Certificate by Secretary Nick Paton in the absence of President Ian Anderson who was ill. A BBQ was held at Dayman Park, Urangan, on 18 February 2025. Next meeting: 18 March 2025. (Secretary – Nick Paton 0428 839 552)



Secretary Nick Paton presenting Denis Bauer with his Veteran Member Certificate.

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

Meeting held on 24 November 2024 at Pancake and Crepe Shop, Oatlands. All members agreed to stay with the current format of four meetings per year (March, AGM in June, September and November), with informal social events such as BBQs etc. held in between the meetings at various locations such as members' homes. It was also unanimously agreed by the members to hold the March 2025 meeting at Campbell Town with the date to be confirmed. It was decided to call for nominations for the position of Secretary which position had been held by inaugural President Andy Beasant since the Branch was formed. There was only one nomination and that was Jennifer Johnston and she was elected as Branch Secretary. Next meeting: 9 March 2025 at the Ross Hotel in Ross.

(Secretary, Jennifer Johnston 0413 143 305)



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