

Executive Summary

This is a joint report of quarterly statutory inspections of both the Brisbane and Cleveland Youth Detention Centres (BYDC and CYDC). The on-site inspections occurred from 21 to 26 November (CYDC) and 29 November to 4 December (BYDC) 2019. Statutory detention centre inspections are conducted by delegated inspectors, located within the office of the Director-General, Department of Youth Justice. This is a joint report covering both inspections provided to the Director-General, which aims to contribute to improving youth detention centre operations across both centres.

Inspections conducted during the December quarter each year are to verify the progress of Inspectorate made recommendations accepted for implementation by Youth Justice Services in previous inspection reports. The verification process involved inspectors interviewing managers and their teams, reviewing procedures and data, and visiting all accommodation units to speak with staff and young people.

At the time of this inspection, the June 2019 inspection report and recommendations had not yet been approved due to the delayed drafting process caused by organisational changes associated with the formation of the new Department of Youth Justice. The Inspectorate's September 2019 quarter recommendations were also undergoing consultation at the time of this inspection. Therefore, the June and September 2019 quarter recommendations were not subject to verification and are not included in this report.

BYDC Recommendations

There were 22 open recommendations dating back to March 2018. Following verification of BYDC and Youth Justice Services implementation actions, 10 of these recommendations are now closed and are listed in the table following this summary. The remaining 12 open recommendations are due for completion in 2020.

CYDC Recommendations

There were 18 recommendations in progress dating back to June 2018. Following verification of CYDC and Youth Justice Services implementation actions, nine of these are now closed and are listed in the table following this summary. The remaining nine open recommendations are due for completion in 2020.

Other Issues

The Inspectorate raises issues on-site during the inspection, directly with staff throughout the inspections, with the Executive Directors and with the Senior Executive Director, Youth Justice Services.

Inspectors received positive feedback from staff and young people at both centres regarding the increase in staffing and the reduction in staff shortage incidents. Young people spoke of their appreciation in being able to enjoy more out of room time and their ability to attend school and programs. Some staff raised concerns around the influx of inexperienced new staff, however, management at both centres have personal oversight of thorough processes to ensure new staff are adequately coached and to maintain the safety of all staff and young people. The majority of staff were positive and welcoming of the new recruits and understood the need to provide support and guidance. Further, the majority of staff felt supported by management and the strategies to develop new staff.

List of Closed Recommendations (BYDC)

March 18 - Rec 3 (Recruitment)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice investigate strategies that improve recruitment, retention and work attendance at BYDC; reduce the reliance on overtime; and remove some of the current risks to young people's service delivery and safe custody.	Closed
June 18 - Rec 5 (Behaviour Model)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Services develop and implement a behavioural model as a matter of urgency and immediately increase the content and availability of training (internal and external) for new and existing staff in the area of behaviour development to ensure staff are educated and able to recognise triggers and positively manage young people who display challenging behaviours.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 1 (School Attendance Recording)	
The Inspectorate recommends that YJS and BYDC together with Department of Education devise a clear and transparent way to record school attendance and ensure BYETC is notified of reasons for absences.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 3 (Youth Justice Detention Centre and Service Centre Communication)	
The Inspectorate recommends that Youth Justice Services establish a communication strategy between the detention centres and Youth Justice Services Centre caseworkers and relevant staff to ensure continuity of care and education for young people.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 4 (Reintegration)	
It is recommended that reintegration and preparation for life in the community be a priority for all young people as soon as possible on entry to detention regardless of remand or sentenced status.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 5 (Life-skills)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Services and the detention centres make available a suite of life-skills programs to enable young people to be independent.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 6 (Links to Community)	
It is recommended that caseworkers at the detention centres link short-term admissions (young people who stay for up to one week) with the relevant YJSC casework team to engage the young person in strategies to prevent a return to detention.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 8 (Cause of Frequency of Use of Force)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Service Review Team work with BYDC to determine the cause and reduce the number of incidents involving the use of force and the frequency of use of force.	Closed
March 19 - Rec 4 (Increased Outside Physical Activity)	
The Inspectorate recommends that Youth Justice Services consider alternatives to lockdowns and restrictions on outside physical activity in response to incidents.	Closed
March 19 - Rec 8 (Partially-clothed Search Methods)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Services investigate the potential difference in the application of policy between both detention centres in relation to partially-clothed searching of young people and implement less invasive search methods.	Closed

List of Closed Recommendations (CYDC)

June 18 - Rec 2 (Suicide Risk Training)	
The Inspectorate recommends that CYDC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase and maintain suicide response training currency to the 85% target, and provide assurances that there are sufficient staff currently trained in suicide response to adequately cover every accommodation unit, particularly during night shift. 	Closed
September 18 - Rec 1 (School Attendance)	
The Inspectorate recommends that CYDC investigate ways to ensure that all eligible young people are able to attend school every day.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 2 (School Attendance Records)	
The Inspectorate recommends that YJS and CYDC together with Department of Education devise a clear and transparent way to record school attendance and ensure CYETC is notified of reasons for absences.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 6 (Reintegration)	
It is recommended that reintegration and preparation for life in the community be a priority for all young people as soon as possible on entry to detention regardless of remand or sentenced status.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 7 (Life-skills)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Services and the detention centres make available a suite of life-skills programs to enable young people to be independent.	Closed
September 18 - Rec 8 (Links to Community)	
It is recommended that caseworkers at the detention centres link short-term admissions (young people who stay for up to one week) with the relevant YJSC casework team to engage the young person in strategies to prevent a return to detention.	Closed
March 19 - Rec 4 (Increased Outside Physical Activity)	
The Inspectorate recommends that Youth Justice Services consider alternatives to lockdowns and restrictions on outside physical activity in response to incidents.	Closed
March 19 - Rec 6 (Compliance with Operational Security Processes)	
It is recommended that detention centre management implement increased compliance monitoring to enhance discipline and adherence to operational security processes.	Closed
March 19 - Rec 8 (Partially-clothed Search Methods)	
It is recommended that Youth Justice Services investigate the potential difference in the application of policy between both detention centres in relation to partially-clothed searching of young people and implement less invasive search methods.	Closed