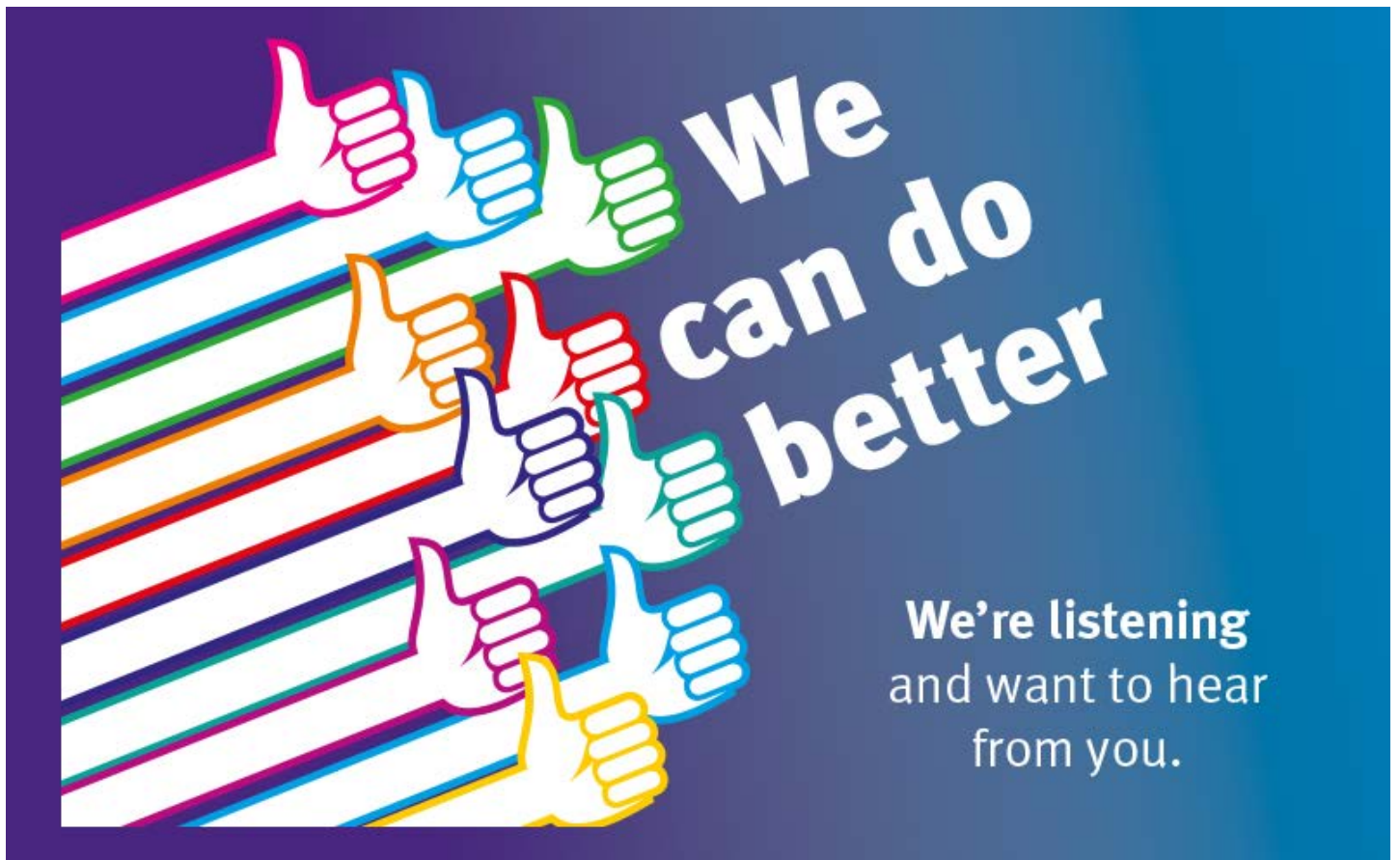


Department of Justice and Attorney-General

2015–16 Client Complaints Annual Report



September 2016



Queensland
Government

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Publication information

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Contact us

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Complaints information

All of our complaints management information can be located on the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG) website www.justice.qld.gov.au

The website includes information on the departmental process for capturing and managing complaints for adults and children, ensuring that making a complaint and/or providing feedback is an easy and transparent process, including:

- DJAG's *Client complaint management policy* and procedures, outlining how we manage complaints and the timeframes for us to respond to a complaint
- information on how to lodge a complaint online or by using the complaints form
- child-friendly information sheets and complaint forms, and
- information and contacts for matters not covered by the DJAG complaints management policy, ensuring a client has another avenue to raise their concerns.

It should be noted that some Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) statistics are categorised differently within this report. In 2016–17, DJAG will conduct further work with the aim of better aligning the reporting categories across the department.

Feedback is important to us

Feedback is a valuable source of information and an important tool for business and staff development. All feedback, including complaints, is valuable in helping us improve our services.

Given the many services the DJAG delivers, it is inevitable that there will be times when clients tell us they have some level of dissatisfaction.

Whether a client has received good service and is happy with DJAG, or is disappointed by what we could or couldn't do for them, we want people to tell us, and be able to do so easily.

Why we value your feedback

All of your feedback, including complaints, is valuable to us. We use your feedback to identify areas for business and staff development and this helps us to continually improve the services we provide.

All the complaints within this report are within the scope of the DJAG policy and have contributed to informing continual improvements to our service delivery.

Improvements to our client complaints management system

During 2015–16, we continued to refine our client complaints management system to collect more data, more often.

The improvements to our system were made to align with external reports by the Queensland Ombudsman, the Office of the Information Commissioner and the *Queensland*

Child Protection Commission of Inquiry Report, Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection.

An important recommendation from the Commission of Inquiry was to improve public confidence in government responsiveness to complaints from children and young people. The complaints process provides a way for children and young people to voice their opinions. We now collect and publish data separately about complaints from children and young people.

We also improved complaints record keeping systems, client accessibility to complaint lodgement information, internal reporting processes, and staff training in complaints management.

We collect complaints data each quarter and present the information to management. The quarterly information is combined to produce an annual complaints report. While the significant improvements to our complaints management system means there cannot be a direct comparison to the inaugural 2014–15 report, this new annual report format will form the basis to illustrate comparative complaint trends and service delivery improvement opportunities in the future.

We will continue to make improvements to our system in the future to help us provide a better service to our customers.

Online satisfaction survey

DJAG introduced an online satisfaction survey where complainants have the opportunity to provide feedback on the way we dealt with their complaint.

During 2015–16, 12 complainants completed the optional online complaint satisfaction survey.

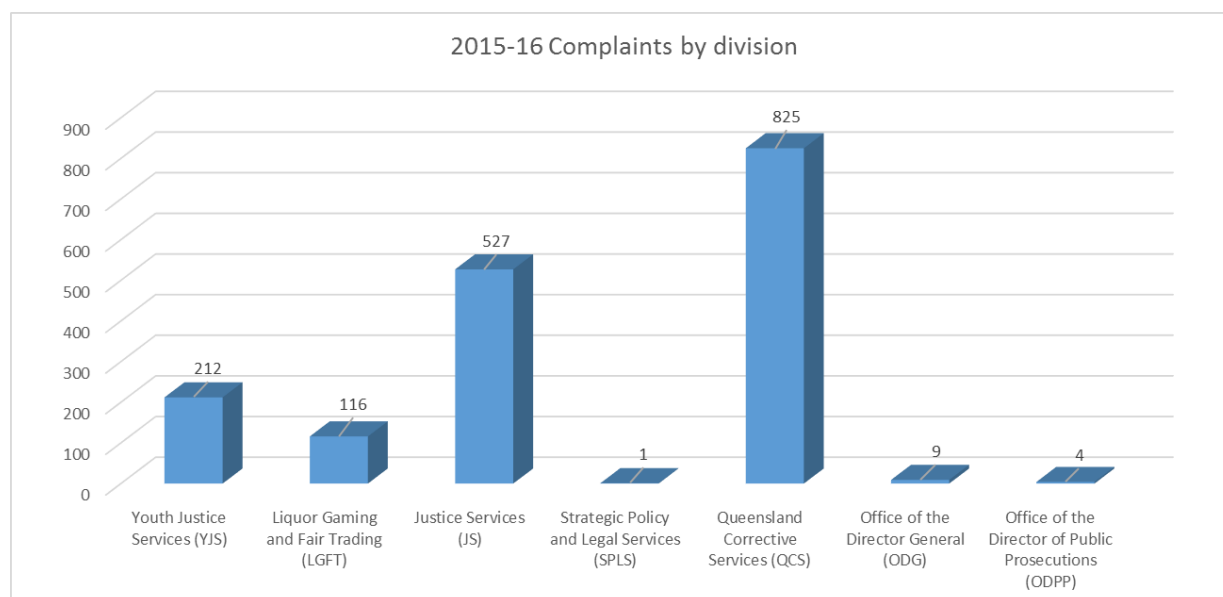
Overall, four survey respondents strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the way that their complaint was handled and six survey respondents strongly disagreed. The remaining two survey respondents agreed they were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled.

Complaints statistics for 2015–16

Complaints received

During 2015–16, there were a total of 1,694 complaints received in DJAG:

- two divisions, Crown Law and Corporate Services did not receive any complaints, and
- Queensland Corrective Services received the highest number of complaints.



Division	Number of Complaints	% of Complaints
Youth Justice Services (YJS)	212	12.51%
Liquor Gaming and Fair Trading (LGFT)	116	6.85%
Justice Services (JS)	527	31.11%
Crown Law (CL)	0	0.00%
Strategic Policy and Legal Services (SPLS)	1	0.06%
Corporate Services (CS)	0	0.00%
Queensland Corrective Services (QCS)	825	48.70%
Office of the Director-General (ODG)	9	0.53%
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)	4	0.24%
TOTAL	1694	100%

Complaints by Children and Young People

During 2015-16, there was a total of 182 complaints received from children and young people. This is equal to about 15 complaints per month.

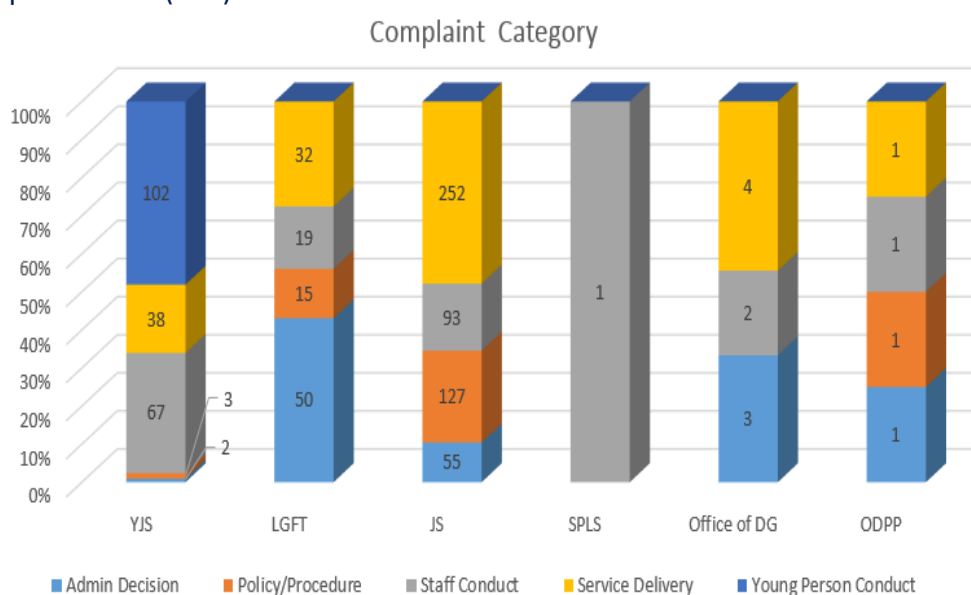
All of these complaints were received by Youth Justice.

The complaints were made by children and young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years.

Types of Complaints¹

The most complaints received during the period were in relation to the following categories:

- service delivery (327)
- staff conduct (183), and
- policy and procedures (146).



Complaints by total and percentage excluding QCS

Complaint category breakdown	Total Complaints	Percentage of total (Category)
Administrative decision	111	12.77%
Policy/ procedure	146	16.80%
Staff Conduct	183	21.06%
Service Delivery	327	37.63%
Young person conduct	102	11.74%
TOTAL²	869	100.00%

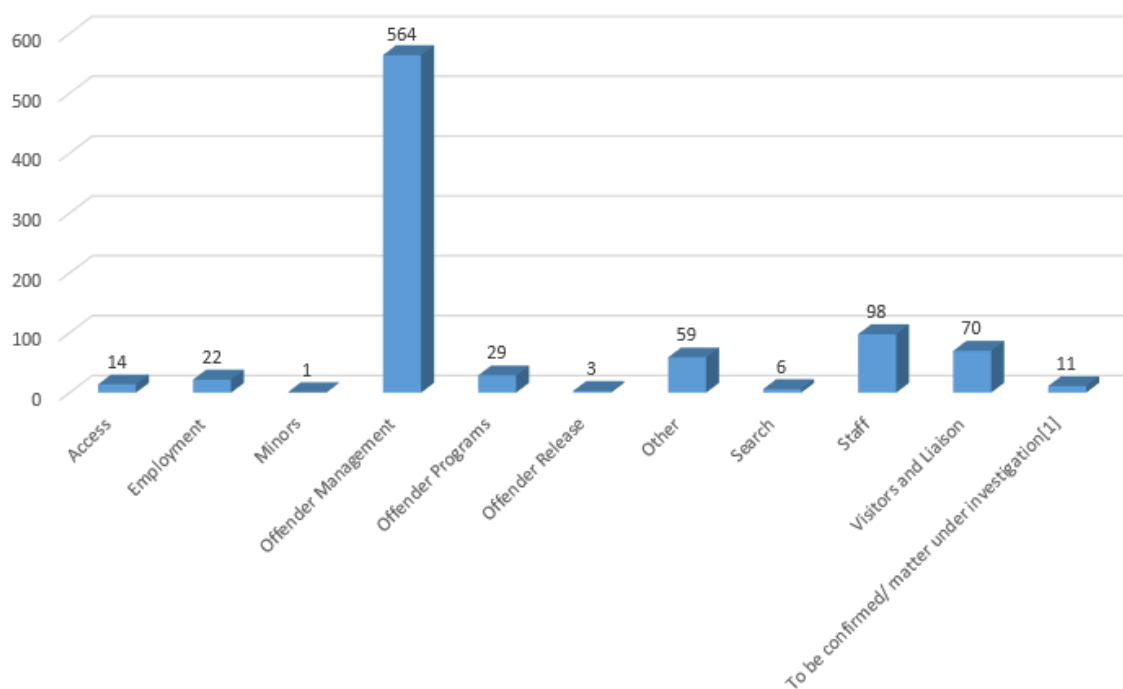
¹ Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) do not report the same categories.

² The total complaints by category breakdown (869) plus the non-defined QCS complaints received (825) equals the total complaints received by DJAG in 2015-16 (1694)

QCS Complaints by total and percentage

Complaint issue breakdown	Total Complaints	Percentage of total (Category)
Access	14	1.60%
Employment	22	2.51%
Minors	1	0.11%
Offender Management	564	64.31%
Offender Programs	29	3.31%
Offender Release	3	0.34%
Other	59	6.73%
Search	6	0.68%
Staff	98	11.17%
Visitors and Liaison	70	7.98%
To be confirmed/ matter under investigation ³	11	1.25%
TOTAL⁴	877	100.0%

QCS Complaints Breakdown



³ Some complaints have not had an issue identified at the time of reporting (1 July 2016) due to the complaint still being under review. A complaint issue will be recorded when the complaint is closed.

⁴ QCS received 825 complaints during 2015-16. A complaint may have more than one issue recorded per complaint. Therefore the totals recorded in the previous section (825) will not equal the number of complaint issues for the time period (877).

Complaint Outcomes⁵

Outcome summary excluding QCS

The table below details the actions taken as a result of complaints received. More than half of the complaints received were resolved through explanation.

Outcome of the complaint ⁶	Total	Percentage of total
Apology	66	7.59%
Reviewed decision - upheld	77	8.86%
Reviewed decision - amended	3	0.35%
Review policy/procedure	6	0.69%
Disciplinary action	6	0.69%
Explanation	443	50.98%
Service improvement	21	2.42%
Staff training	25	2.88%
Compensation	3	0.35%
No action	67	7.71%
Frivolous	46	5.29%
Resolved complaints with no recorded outcome ⁷	106	12.20%
TOTAL⁸	869	100.00%



⁵ Queensland Corrective Services do not report the same categories

⁶ One complaint may have more than one outcome.

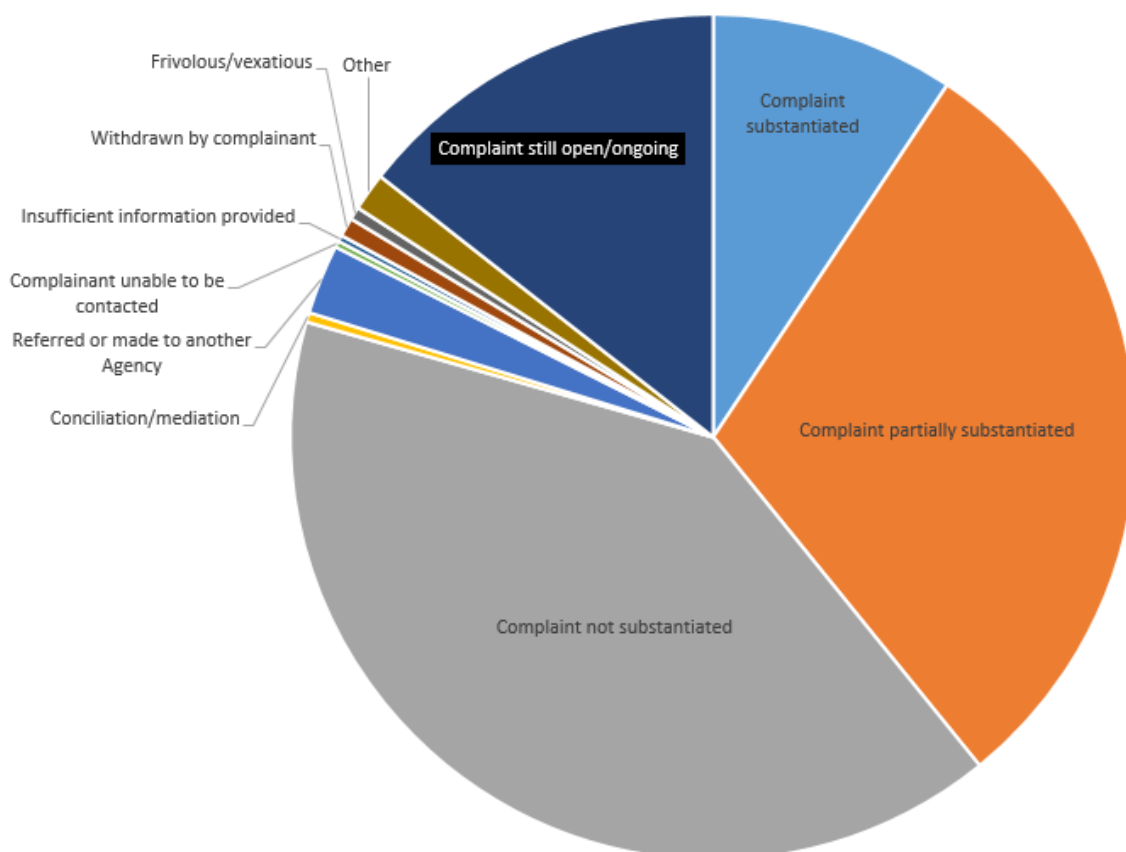
⁷ Complaints received with no recorded outcomes was identified in the 2016 Complaints management administrative review. Gaps in data management, reporting requirements and training material were identified and will be continually addressed to drive accurate and transparent complaints reporting.

⁸ The total outcome of complaints received breakdown (869) plus the non-defined QCS complaints received (825) equals the total DJAG complaints received in 2015–16 (1694)

QCS Outcome summary

Complaint Outcome breakdown	Total Complaints	Percentage of total
Complaint substantiated	77	9.33%
Complaint partially substantiated	246	29.82%
Complaint not substantiated	332	40.24%
Conciliation/mediation	3	0.36%
Referred or made to another Agency	22	2.67%
Complainant unable to be contacted	2	0.24%
Insufficient information provided	2	0.24%
Withdrawn by complainant	6	0.73%
Frivolous/vexatious	4	0.48%
Other	12	1.45%
Complaint still open/ongoing	119	14.42%
TOTAL	825	100.00%

QCS Complaint Outcome Breakdown



Actions in response to complaints

A number of business and process improvements were reviewed as a result of complaints received during the period, including:

Action/Division	Youth Justice	Justice Services	LGFT	SPLS	QCS
Review policy/procedures		✓			
Disciplinary action	✓	✓			
Service improvement	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Staff training	✓	✓	✓		✓

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) have developed the QCAT Communications Strategy 2015–17, using complaints and feedback to identify information gaps and priority areas for education through client engagement and online development.

The Townsville Youth Justice Service Centre have implemented revised policies and procedure documents for staff to improve youth services at the centre.

The Office of the Public Guardian provide ongoing training for staff in preparing complaints responses. Complaints are reviewed fortnightly by management and the Deputy Public Guardian reviews all complaint responses.

Strategic Policy and Legal Services division have reinforced the need to record all client conversations and to review applicant files before advice is given to clients.

QCS conducted training across its correctional facilities and probation and parole offices throughout the year.

Complaints management summary

The overall status for management of DJAG complaints received in 2015–16:

Complaint Status as at 30 June 2016	Total Complaints	Percentage of total
Resolved	1345	79.40%
Withdrawn by complainant	27	1.59%
Complaint rejected	27	1.59%
Unresolved/Processing	295	17.41%
TOTAL	1694	100.00%

DJAG is committed to continually delivering high quality services that respond to the community's needs, incorporating effectively complaints management practices to ensure accountability, access to services and to drive business improvement.