

## **Inquest into the death of Anthony William Young, Shaun Basil Kumeroa, Edward Wayne Logan, Laval Donovan Zimmer and Troy Martin Foster**

Between August 2013 and November 2014, officers from Queensland Police, acting in the course of their duties, shot and killed five men in unrelated incidents. The incidents occurred at the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. In particular, three of the deaths occurred over the period of one week from 18 November 2014 and 24 November 2014.

State Coroner Terry Ryan conducted separate inquests into each of the deaths and on 20 October 2017 delivered his comments and recommendations.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported.

The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

### **Recommendation 1**

The Queensland Police Service implement a model of incident command training for all operational police below the rank of sergeant.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

Incident command training is currently delivered to all constables as part of the constable development program workshop which includes virtual reality scenarios.

In addition, scenario-based training incorporating incident command, incident appreciation and briefings were delivered to officers in 2016 and 2017, as part of the compulsory operational skills and tactics (OST) training.

Additional briefings and handover elements of incident command will be incorporated into the 2018-19 OST dynamic interactive scenarios, in addition to compulsory online learning which will complement the face-to-face training.

Elements of this training material were incorporated into the 2016-17 and 2017-18 OST online learning scenarios. The 2018-19 OST online learning has not yet been developed, however, incident command training will be incorporated into the dynamic interactive scenarios training.

### **Recommendation 2**

The Queensland Police Service review operational skills and tactics training to incorporate training on appropriate radio communication and active listening techniques to ensure the effective transfer of information, and to assist frontline officers to recognise critical information.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The operational skills and tactics training (OST) includes a strong focus on de-escalation techniques including the policing with influence communication model, behavioural stairway influence model, and active listening techniques designed by the Negotiator Coordination Unit. In addition, the use of radio communication under stress has been included as part of the 2017-18 and 2018-19 OST dynamic interactive scenario training (DIST), and will continue to be part of DIST in the future.

The Queensland Police Service reviews the OST curriculum annually, and incorporates review recommendations and external consultation feedback, as required.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Queensland Police Service revise its policy regarding first aid training for operational police so that it is consistent with the current guideline issued by the Australian Resuscitation Council.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

All Queensland Police Service work units ensure compliance with the required ratios for the number of members trained in first aid.

In addition, Tactical First Aid Training (TFAT) has been incorporated into the compulsory annual operational skills and tactics training (OST) for all police. TFAT does not replace first aid certification, however, comprises more relevant practical components for operational police. Both the first aid training and TFAT align with the Australian Resuscitation Guidelines, in particular section 9.1.1 First aid for management of bleeding, and is reviewed annually as part of the OST curriculum review. TFAT incorporates in-depth training in the management of external bleeding by direct pressure, treatment of embedded objects and the application of tourniquets, modular bandages, wound packaging and chest seals.

As at 24 July 2018, 9794 members of the service have completed TFAT as part of compulsory annual operational skills training in the 2017/2018 training year. The techniques taught in TFAT have been applied successfully in operational situations and are credited with potential lifesaving outcomes in more than nine cases.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) continue to review its method for reporting the use of force applied by operational police with a view to implementing a system that would provide the QPS with accurate data that can be used to better inform use of force policy, reporting and training.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) currently collects use of force data through QPRIME for incidents involving injury and a small number of other specialised deployment situations (eg. presentation of a firearm). This is a minimalistic approach and is not consistent with best practice use of force data collection methods. The QPS acknowledges the need for a wider data collection process to gain a broader appreciation of use of force deployments within the QPS.

The data collected through this process is intended to identify what areas are exhibiting excessive force, which will inform future policy and training requirements to minimise the levels and

prevalence of force used by QPS officers. To facilitate the data collection process and to gather additional data, the QPS will be lowering the reporting threshold.

The QPS Ethical Standards Command (ESC) established a project team to engage with frontline and digital systems to define the technical requirements that will complement a police intranet reporting use of force reporting solution. The project team undertook extensive consultation with officers in charge across the state to assist in forecasting the potential impacts on frontline policing operations and potential solutions.

It is expected the changes to QPRIME will be implemented in early 2019. These changes will require all officers to make additional entries into QPRIME for non-injury use of force incidents. The QPRIME information will be used by the QPS to provide more accurate external reporting of use of force data, in line with other police jurisdictions. This data will be used to complement existing early intervention strategies employed by ESC.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) conduct a review with respect to how often, and in what manner, firearms skills should be refreshed in order to maintain effective performance under stress, and that as part of that review the QPS consider whether operational skills and tactics firearms training should occur more often than once every calendar year.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

All Queensland Police Service officers are required to attend firearms training once every calendar year using live fire ammunition, in addition to dynamic interactive scenario training (DIST) which uses less than lethal rounds. DIST forms part of the mandatory operational skills and tactics training and enables trainers and other senior officers to monitor and assess an officer's performance and decision making skills under stress, and to determine if further training or development is required.

The QPS approached the University of Queensland to assist in an evidence-based study regarding the frequency of live fire training and the shot placement of firearms in operational incidents.

Supplementary training sessions, based on relative demand, are also under development to support local needs.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Queensland Police Service continue to explore ways in which use of force training in low light conditions can be effectively delivered, including through the use of purpose built and dedicated facilities to assist in the delivery and frequency of this training.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The development of the new Counter Terrorism and Community Safety Centre (CTCSC) at Wacol, due for completion in late 2020, will provide low light training environments for police operational skills and tactics (OST) training. This centre will significantly enhance the quality and capacity to deliver relevant and applicable multi-disciplined OST training to all police. The centre is programmed to provide OST training to all operational police within the South East Corner of Queensland,

however, a review by an external benefits analyst is underway to establish whether a state-wide rollout of training within the centre is viable.

The QPS rolled out 9500 weapon mounted light systems to operational police and was incorporated into the compulsory annual OST training for all police officers. This weapon mounted torch will enhance officer safety and increase operational effectiveness in low light policing situations.

#### **Recommendation 7**

Operational skills and tactics training continue to incorporate 'lessons learned' from previous shootings into scenario based training, including anticipating the presence of weapons on arrival at the scene, tactical withdrawal, and managing bystanders during an incident.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service is developing additional theoretical training opportunities to be conducted during the annual operational skills and tactics training to complement and support the interactive scenario-based training. This may include officers watching videos and reading other relevant material as they become available.

The Dynamic Interactive Scenario Training (DIST) is reviewed annually, and incorporates lessons learned and current operational and threat environment factors.

#### **Recommendation 8**

The Queensland Police Service conduct a review of the standing orders governing the conduct of Ethical Standards Command (ESC) investigations of critical incidents involving a fatality. The review should include the following matters for the consideration of investigators:

- a. Where it is desirable to defer an interview with the ESC investigator (including for the welfare of involved officers), or impractical for that interview to occur close to the time of the incident, an initial account of events should be taken in a short interview recorded by a suitably independent, but readily available, investigator. The officer conducting this initial interview should be someone whose involvement is approved by the person directing the ESC investigation, but need not be that officer or an ESC officer.
- b. A restatement of the advantages of walk-through interviews as the primary means of obtaining the account of involved police officers, while leaving the means of the primary interview to the discretion of the investigator.
- c. Provision for officers to be given the opportunity to view relevant video or other recordings, including body worn camera footage, of an incident at a time considered appropriate by the investigator but not before the primary interview; and an opportunity for officers to provide addendum statements or take part in addendum interviews where either officers or investigators consider that desirable.
- d. All forensic testing of involved officers should be conducted within two hours of the incident occurring.
- e. A separate senior ESC officer should be given oversight of actions concerning involved officers, including officer separation; initial interviews; forensic testing; issuing instructions; sending officers home if appropriate; transporting and accommodating officers; providing a change of clothes etc.

Response and action: the recommendation is agreed in part and implementation is complete.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) Ethical Standards Command (ESC) conducted a full review of the instructions governing the conduct of investigations into police related incidents involving a fatality. The instruction has been amended to reflect most of the recommendations made by the coroner. The instructions were implemented on 29 November 2017.

Recommendation 8d is supported in part. The QPS conducts forensic testing of all officers involved in critical incidents which may include the collection of DNA and clothing, seizure of accoutrements and collection of blood/bodily fluid contaminants. Pursuant to Part 5A of the *Police Service Administration Act 1990* (PSAA), a breath test is to be conducted within 2 hours of the critical incident occurring and a urine drug screen is to be completed within 24 hours.

While the QPS adheres to the PSAA and completes all breath tests within 2 hours and drug screen tests within the 24-hour period, it is impractical for the QPS to complete drug screens (in addition to other testing requirements) within 2 hours of a critical incident, as recommended by the coroner. The QPS endeavours to complete all required testing following a critical incident as soon as practical. Within the last 20 years, the QPS attended over 200 critical incidents and completed the required testing within 12 hours of the incident occurring.

**Recommendation 9**

The Queensland Police Service consider adopting service-wide an approach analogous to the system employed by Special Emergency Response Team for post incident support of officers, subject to appropriate adaptations having regard to local circumstances and officers being trained as to the limits of their role.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service reviewed and amended its current instruction to reflect the recommendation made by the coroner. The revised instruction now aligns with the approach employed by the Special Emergency Response Team (SERT) for post-incident support of officers.

The revised instruction states that *'a welfare officer is appointed from the District or Command, to attend to the welfare needs of the subject members, including identifying a support person not involved in the incident to remain with the subject member; transporting the subject member from the scene to a police establishment; in circumstances requiring forensic examination of the subject member and/or clothing, arranging a change of clothing to be provided once forensically dealt with. The welfare officer is to ensure support persons are aware of the direction for the subject members to be separated and not to discuss the matter'*.

The instructions were implemented on 29 November 2017.

**Recommendation 10**

Officers involved in a critical incident involving a fatality be mandated to attend at least one session with a psychologist or psychiatrist independent of the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and that this issue be the subject of a separate review by the QPS. The review should consider:

- the most effective ways of supporting police officers after a critical incident involving a fatality in the medium to long term

- the training of officers in supervisory positions to ensure that they can appropriately monitor officers under their supervision who have been involved in critical incidents involving a fatality; including an awareness of warning signs that an officer is experiencing difficulties; and of steps that can be taken to ensure that such officers receive timely support.
- how appropriate support mechanisms can be established and how the adequacy of existing mechanisms is monitored.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is under consideration.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) proposes to engage the Melbourne-based company, Phoenix, formerly known as the Australian Centre for Post-Traumatic Mental Health, to complete a review of QPS's policy, systems and processes for supporting and monitoring employees involved in critical incidents and the appropriateness of referrals to psychiatrists and/or psychologists for mandatory assessment following a critical incident. In the interim, the QPS will continue to review the coroner's recommendation with a view to continuous improvement of these services.

The QPS is also considering some of the recommendations from the Queensland Audit Office Report into Mental Health Services. Furthermore, in February 2018, the QPS launched the Our people matter strategy which focuses on the health, safety and wellbeing of QPS members and their families. The strategy will connect the needs of frontline management and supervisors with solutions and support mechanisms to create working environments that will protect the long-term health and wellbeing of employees. The QPS intends to provide refresher training courses to supervisors to build their knowledge and capability, and to provide options for supporting members during and post critical incidents. All mental health training, including program design, content and frequency will be reviewed in 2018 to ensure the issues outlined in the coroner's recommendations are consistently addressed and reinforced in all programs.

Additionally, the QPS has a range of personnel including 600 peer support officers and thousands of supervisory staff including 24 psychologists and social workers whose roles are to monitor and refer their staff and colleagues who may exhibit distress and or any behaviours that require debriefing and or mental health support. The QPS has internal and external counselling and support options and refers more than 600 officers requiring paid treatment to psychologists or psychiatrists each year. The QPS also engages more than 32 chaplains in voluntary, part-time and full time roles to support all geographical areas of the state.

**Recommendation 11**

The Queensland Government develop appropriate referral pathways, through an agency such as Victim Assist Queensland, to enable the families of those shot by police and witnesses to such events to be provided with counselling and support.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service has existing policies and procedures in place to support families and witnesses in the event of a fatal police shooting incident. For example, where the next of kin of the deceased agrees to the release of their information to the Queensland Homicide Victims Support

Group (QHVSG), the notification is emailed by police to the QHVSG within 24 hours of the commencement of the investigation. The QHVSG offers 24-hour emotional support, personal advocacy and information to all people affected by homicides in Queensland. Significant changes to the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009* in 2017 strengthened victims' rights through the replacement of the 'Fundamental Principles of Justice' with the 'Charter of Victim Rights'. The charter requires police to proactively provide victims of an act of violence in Queensland with information about the victims' register, investigations and prosecutions without the victim having to ask for the information.

The QPS has connected vulnerable and disadvantaged people who may be experiencing stress, distress and a range of social issues, with support services since 2005 under different support program names. Police Referrals is the name of the current program and is an embedded strategy of QPS frontline operational policing. Police Referrals continues to be developed to ensure frontline officers are able to provide individuals, their families and carers the option of a referral to local service providers.

Police Referrals has over 450 service providers for any one of 23 different referral categories. One of the referral categories relates to provision of counselling and support to family members and witnesses following a fatal police shooting. Once a referral is made, the client is contacted within a few business days by the relevant support provider.

A network of officers provide local 'on the ground' support and education to district police about the service's referral approach, work with local service providers to ensure appropriate services are receiving police referrals and assist in resolving issues regarding local service provision. The network liaises with other officers responsible for delivering community-based policing initiatives to support vulnerable persons e.g. Domestic and Family Violence Coordinator, Mental Health Intervention Coordinator.

The QPS is improving the Police Referrals program by identifying ongoing system improvements including possible new referral categories.

The Charter of Victims' Rights requires all agencies who engage with victims, to ensure victims are given information as soon as possible about services which may aid them in their recovery. The QPS has Police Referrals to ensure timely services are provided to all victims. Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ), which operates within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, is a service provider under the Police Referrals program. VAQ provides a wide range of services to victims of crime throughout the state, including information and referral to support services around Queensland. A dedicated police officer is appointed to act as a conduit between the QPS and VAQ to expedite the exchange of information directly to VAQ in accordance with legislative requirements, including providing progress updates on investigations.

The QPS is developing referral cards to give to people who initially decline an offer for a referral but may later change their mind.

#### **Recommendation 12**

The Queensland Government conduct a comprehensive review of the mental health intervention portfolio/project (MHIP) to ensure the revitalisation of the MHIP as recommended by the Violent Confrontations Review (VCR) recommendation 2, and its sustainability. The review of the MHIP should consider:

- the establishment of full time dedicated Mental Health Intervention Coordinator (MHIC) in each police district
- the establishment of full-time dedicated MHIC roles in each police region

- the extension of the hours of operation for the mental health clinicians embedded within the Brisbane Police Communications Centre to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- a model for dedicated training to take place for police officers and mental health clinicians involved in the MHIP
- the governance framework in place with respect to the MHIP with a view to ensuring a level of consistency across the State, and the exchange of information between QPS districts and hospital and health services
- a review of each police district to ascertain whether a co-responder model is in place and possible expansion of the model to all districts
- how to embed mental health training within annual Operational Skills and Tactics (OST) training. The training should be dynamic, scenario-based, and include communication and de-escalation skills and be delivered with the assistance of mental health professionals and those who have 'lived experience' of mental health or cognitive disabilities
- the inclusion of appropriate flags in Q-Prime to alert Queensland Police Service officers to relevant mental health history.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is under consideration.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service (lead) supported by Queensland Health.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The recommendation is under review. An update will be provided in 2018.

### **Recommendation 13**

The Queensland Police Service amend Chapter 6 of the Operational Procedures Manual (OPM) so that there is no need for a police officer to subjectively assess whether the situation is a 'mental health incident' as defined currently within the OPM. The OPM should be drafted in such a way that frontline police are encouraged to call for mental health assistance in respect of incidents.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) *Operational procedures manual* (OPM) and the *First response handbook* were amended to reflect the coroner's recommendation. The amendments were published on 24 January 2018.

In making an informed decision on the most effective and appropriate policing response, officers attending an incident need to consider whether the occurrence falls within the definition of a mental health incident. If deemed a mental health incident, officers should as soon as reasonably practicable, seek advice or information regarding the subject person from the relevant Queensland Health mental health service to ensure the health and safety of the person in crisis or any other person. Based on the availability of mental health clinicians, the following types of responses available to assist police including assistance from: the local mental health unit, either in-patient or community centre; the mental health clinician, placed in the Brisbane Police Communications Centre; or a co-responder (i.e. in some police districts a team comprising a police officer and mental health clinician are available to respond to mental health incidents), if available in the identified location.



In addition, located in the QPS districts is a network of police officers (mental health intervention coordinators), who:

- provide direction, guidance and advice to Service members and the community, on issues associated with mental health issues
- assist district education and training offices in developing and conducting education and training on legislation, policy, orders and procedures, including associated issues in dealing with mental health issues
- overview the development and standardisation of district instructions relating to mental health incidents
- provide assistance to officers in the assessment and response to mental health incidents according to local protocols and where necessary, assisting with requests for information from Queensland Health and the Queensland Ambulance Service.

#### **Recommendation 14**

The Queensland Police Service retain mental health training as a core component of the recruit and first year constable training programmes.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

Queensland Police recruits undertake all components of the vulnerable persons training, which consists of mental health training and domestic and family violence training.

The mental health training component enables participants to identify and understand characteristics of impaired mental capacity; to understand and appreciate the policing with influence model for verbal de-escalation in a policing context; and to apply effective communication skills for responding to and managing situations where a person presents with an impaired mental capacity in accordance with legislation.

Police recruits undergo further scenario-based training which is assessed during skills training phases.

The first year constable program continues to provide the mental health intervention training package which is delivered to all first year constables by education and training officers across the state.

#### **Recommendation 15**

The Queensland Government continue to allocate funds to the body worn camera roll out to enable all front line officers to be equipped with this technology.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

In 2015, the Queensland Government allocated \$6 million to provide body worn cameras for the operational police. The Queensland Police Service (QPS) utilised this funding for stage one of the body worn camera project which delivered 2700 body worn cameras to frontline police officers. In 2016, the QPS provided an additional \$1 million for the stage two rollout which delivered a further 2400 body worn cameras to frontline police. This brought the total number of devices deployed to 5100.

An additional 2,000 body worn cameras are required in order for all operational police officers to be equipped with this device. The QPS will work with the Queensland Government to continue to identify efficiencies and provide funding for additional body worn cameras for all frontline police officers.

Current QPS policy also allows the use of 'bring your own' (BYO) body worn cameras by frontline police officers, subject to approval and conformance to performance specifications.

The QPS remains committed to further enhancing our mobile capability and this initiative will remain at the forefront of QPS's funding priorities into the foreseeable future. The allocation of body worn camera devices is currently being reviewed to ensure the most effective and equitable distribution to frontline officers across the state.

#### **Recommendation 16**

The Queensland Government consider whether a scheme for the regulation of replica firearms with linkages to relevant Queensland Police Service intelligence holdings should be established in Queensland, having regard to interstate legislation and the work of the national Firearms and Weapons Policy Working Group.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) implemented the recommendation when it considered a scheme for the regulation of firearms with linkages to relevant QPS intelligence holdings, as suggested by the coroner. The QPS decided not to support such a scheme for the following reasons:

- a person may be in possession of more than one replica, imitation or genuine firearm, some of which may not be registered in Queensland
- some replica or imitation firearms are capable of firing lethal and non-lethal ammunition which compromises an officer's safety

A person in possession of any weapon, including a replica or imitation firearm, is currently recorded as a weapons holder in Queensland. The QPS's information management system, QPRIME, does not specify if the weapon is a genuine, imitation or replica firearm for the reasons listed above, and to ensure officer safety.

The current legislation has been successful in controlling and regulating the licensing and use of actual weapons and allows for imprisonment and fines for the misuse of replica weapons.

#### **Recommendation 17**

The Queensland Police Service continue to provide Special Emergency Response Team officers with training in negotiation and de-escalation skills to ensure that they are equipped to deal with parties in siege situations and other high risk environments.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

In October 2016, the Negotiator Coordination Unit delivered training on communication and de-escalation skills at high risk incidents to officers from the Special Emergency Response Team (SERT). In addition, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) also delivered vulnerable persons training to all frontline police officers which included a component on 'understanding a person in crisis and the effects of mental health issues in the communication process'.

This training will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains contemporary, and will also form part of SERT's ongoing training requirements.

SERT continues to be involved in national team leader courses, tactical commander courses and operator skill enhancement courses across the nation. This allows the QPS to benchmark its systems, processes and skills against police tactical group units across Australia and New Zealand, and enhance its tactical response.

**Recommendation 18**

The Queensland Police Service continue to examine the way in which it deals with threats to the public interest arising from nuisance calls, with a view to continuous improvement in the communication training made available to all call takers with respect to dealing with callers who may have a mental illness and/or cognitive impairment. Such examination should address both training and technology solutions.

Response and action: the recommendation is agreed in part and implementation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

**On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is committed to ensuring its service response remains contemporary and reflective of emerging trends related to threats to the public interest arising from nuisance calls, and offenders who have a history of mental health, whilst maintaining the safety of all Queenslanders. Activities include:

- Training for new communications operators was updated in 2016 with the implementation of the current communications operator course. This training provides operators with the skills necessary to manage nuisance calls and threats, and offenders who have been identified with a history of mental health. This training also encompasses a component on vulnerable persons focused on mental health. Building on this work, a continuous improvement process has been established to review and update training for communications operators and supervisors. This process allows for incremental improvements to be made to the training program and content as legislation and operational methods change, and updated advice is received from relevant partner agencies.
- Policelink call takers (both sworn and non-sworn) participated in the vulnerable persons training in 2017 which included scenarios in the mental health face-to-face session to refresh and practice de-escalation techniques. It is planned to enhance future iterations of the Policelink-specific training curriculum with soft skills call control to ensure call takers maintain necessary skills required to effectively communicate with persons in crisis.

- Policelink implemented a case management approach to occurrences, assisting mental health intervention coordinators to better assess risks to make an informed decision on a course of action e.g. referral to mental health services where appropriate, or in some cases prosecution.

The QPS reviews the training requirements for communication room operators and supervisors annually and incorporates lessons learned as required. Additionally, the annual training curriculum for police communication centre staff is currently under review by the communications group.

Regarding technology, the QPS through its business improvement unit regularly considers opportunities to enhance the service's frontline policing capability, including frontline information and communication technology systems, and through engagement with portfolio partners.

At this point in time the current QPS systems utilised by communication centre, namely the Queensland computer aided despatch system (QCAD), are considered operationally fit to meet the requirements of the recommendation. QCAD interfaces well with internal/external QPS systems to deliver an effective tool for the management of the communications network. The QPS has additional integration capability with QCAD through inter-agency CAD electronic messaging system (ICEMS). ICEMS allows for instant messaging between Queensland emergency service providers including the Queensland Ambulance Service, and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. This allows for instantaneous transfer of calls for service between emergency service agencies.

#### **Recommendation 19**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) incorporate options for dealing with nuisance callers in relevant standing instructions and mandatory training for call takers including:

- early diversion to PoliceLink or another support agency, including the caller's primary clinician
- interrogation of Q-Prime to ascertain relevant mental health history
- giving local station shift supervisors discretion in dealing with the situation (including by calling the nuisance caller)
- engagement of mental health clinicians embedded in QPS communications centres
- engagement of QPS trained negotiators.

Response and action: the recommendation is agreed in part and implementation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Queensland Police Service.

#### **On 16 July 2018 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services responded:**

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) has various protocols in place to deal with situations involving nuisance calls and offenders who have a history of mental health.

The QPS's current telephone system permits triple zero calls from the police communications centres (PCC) to be transferred to Policelink and into referral services, which could include the caller's primary clinician.

Station supervisors maintain oversight of the jobs/calls for service for their designated station, and have the option to intervene in matters involving nuisance calls in an attempt to resolve the situation in a timely manner. To facilitate this, station supervisors may contact the nuisance caller direct and/or send a crew to their residence, in addition to checking QPRIME to ascertain relevant mental health history and if there was a history of repeat offences.

The QPS engaged four mental health intervention coordinators (MHIC) from Queensland Health. These MHICs are currently embedded in the Brisbane Police Communications Centre and provide support to officers across the state in dealing with offenders and/or witnesses who have a history of mental health. In addition, there are also mental health liaison officers in regions and districts across the state who provide a point of reference and referral of mental health related matters.

The PCC will only engage trained negotiators for serious incidents. Negotiators are a specialist resource that are utilised in high risk environments for serious incidents, and are generally not engaged for incidents only involving nuisance calls. However, in 2017, the QPS delivered the vulnerable persons training package to over 11500 sworn members, up to and including the rank of inspector, and targeted unsworn members from Policelink and the PCC's. The training encompassed components on negotiation and dealing with offenders and/or members of the public who may have a history of mental health.

Modifications have been made to the communications operator training to include content from the vulnerable persons training package, and all instructions in relation to this training and PCC processes have been updated to reflect current practices. A modified vulnerable persons training package has been developed specifically for communications operators. It is anticipated that delivery of this training will commence in the second half of 2018.

Additionally, the annual training curriculum for PCC staff is under review by the communications group with the aim of expanding the content to include a component on negotiation.