



## JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Rockhampton Fire and Rescue Station (Source: Queensland Fire and Emergency Services)



# JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

## OVERVIEW

The safety and wellbeing of Queenslanders is a fundamental priority for the state government. It invests in essential police, fire, emergency and disaster management services, courthouses, and secure youth detention centres and correctional facilities to ensure safety and justice is delivered fairly.

Issues within the justice and public safety system are becoming more complex and often have broader economic, environmental and societal interdependencies. As services continue to evolve, digital transformation is impacting all areas of the sector. For the community and frontline staff, the increased use of technology will help improve safety, efficiency and more effective delivery of these essential services.

Unprecedented and persistent increases in demand are placing additional strain on the capacity of the state's existing courthouse portfolio. It is critical courthouses are responsibly and sustainably managed, maintained and invested in to meet future need. Adapting to technology advances and changing community expectations are challenging the traditional delivery of justice in Queensland Courts. With 87 courthouses across Queensland, Magistrates Courts can hear cases in 131 locations throughout the state, while the Supreme and District Courts sit in 11 and 38 locations respectively.

Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) plays an integral role in the criminal justice system, by ensuring prisoners and offenders are less likely to re-offend. QCS manages more than \$4 billion in assets, including 11 high-security and six low-security correctional centres, 36 Community Corrections District Offices and more than 150 reporting centres. Prisoner numbers reached historic levels during 2021, adding pressure to already strained infrastructure including prisoner and support services such as health, education and rehabilitation programs, and critical services infrastructure. This is further exacerbated by challenging prisoner profiles, including those with complex mental health issues, substance misuse, personal care needs and disabilities that require purpose-built accommodation. To support projections to 2036, QCS has undertaken capital acquisition planning and is progressing business cases to address both prisoner and health service capacity issues.

The Queensland Government also provides youth detention centres as secure places for young people. They exist to protect the safety of the community, provide consequences for offending, and reduce reoffending through age-appropriate support services and preparing detained young people to live productively in the community.

Our police provide effective, high-quality services, working with community, government and private sector partners to make Queensland safe. Our police service is supported by police stations, police watchhouses, neighbourhood beats and shopfronts, communication centres and police academies. Advancements in technology and the scale and diversity of the state's natural landscape have also resulted in a shift to a more mobile policing model.

Queensland is affected by natural disasters more than any other state in Australia. Queensland's emergency and disaster management and response has been recognised as some of the best in the country. Disaster management is shared across a number of agencies, ensuring that local communities are supported in a range of ways including emergency shelters, provision of advice and renewal of affected infrastructure.

Queensland's emergency services teams already work collaboratively, however as their service models evolve, the way we plan and provide the supporting infrastructure must also adapt. There is a significant opportunity to co-locate complementary justice and public safety services, such as courts and police services, as well as explore different delivery models.



*Resilience workshop (Source: Queensland Reconstruction Authority)*

## CURRENT KEY INITIATIVES

- Replacement of police facilities**  
 \$29.65 million to complete the replacement of police facilities at Beaudesert, Biloela, Burketown, Nambour and Pormpuraaw.
- Justice system Courts audio-visual capacity upgrade**  
 \$7.4 million to expand and upgrade existing audio-visual capacity in the justice system, including video conferencing and in-custody court appearances.
- Southern Queensland Correctional Precinct Part 2**  
 \$654 million to deliver a correctional precinct emphasising health, wellbeing and rehabilitation to reduce reoffending. The precinct will create over 500 permanent jobs and support local businesses.
- West Moreton Youth Detention Centre**  
 \$150 million for the completed West Moreton Youth Detention Centre, a 32-bed facility at Wacol.

- Maryborough Queensland Fire and Emergency Services headquarters replacement**  
 \$12.1 million to complete the replacement of the Maryborough regional Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) headquarters and auxiliary fire and rescue station.



Police Officer (Source: Queensland Police Service)

## TRENDS



**A SHIFT TO MORE MOBILE POLICING**  
 is reducing demand on police facilities in communities



**THE INCREASED USE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
 is helping to improve safety, efficiency and effectiveness these essential services for both community and frontline services



There is an overall decline in structural fire events but an increase in the number and intensity of  
**SEVERE WEATHER OR OTHER NATURAL HAZARD EVENTS SUCH AS BUSH FIRES**



Total prisoner (adult) numbers reached historic highs during 2021 resulting in  
**ONGOING CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS FOR PRISONER ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**



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## CHALLENGES

### Shifting demand for service delivery

The delivery of emergency services continues to be challenged by a number of growing and shifting demands, including high population growth in several locations, changing risk profiles, an ageing population, increased cultural diversity, changing community expectations, and the operational responses required for significant events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Regional service delivery

As almost 30 per cent of Queensland's population live outside SEQ, it is important that the state continues to strongly consider regional service delivery needs across justice and public safety agencies.



### Ageing assets, maintenance and changing needs

Ageing and geographically dispersed facilities present challenges for all justice and safety infrastructure, with an increase in maintenance needs exacerbated by harsh tropical climates and increasing frequency of natural disasters. Many courthouses are either heritage listed or hold historical significance in the community. Older facilities also present challenges with maintenance and in continuing to meet modern expectations and service needs (e.g. safe spaces in courts for Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) matters). Safely maintaining aged correctional facilities is also challenging where there is no available capacity to temporarily relocate prisoners.



### Increased demand on the justice system

Queensland's criminal justice system is large and complex, and demand is increasing. Operations or changes in one area can have consequential impacts on other sectors of the system. No single agency has the capacity to address the complex causes of offending, or manage demand pressures on the system. For example, legislative changes can have downstream impacts by potentially increasing the complexity, time and volume taken to investigate matters and for matters to proceed through Court.



Justice System Flow Diagram (adapted from NSW Infrastructure Strategy)

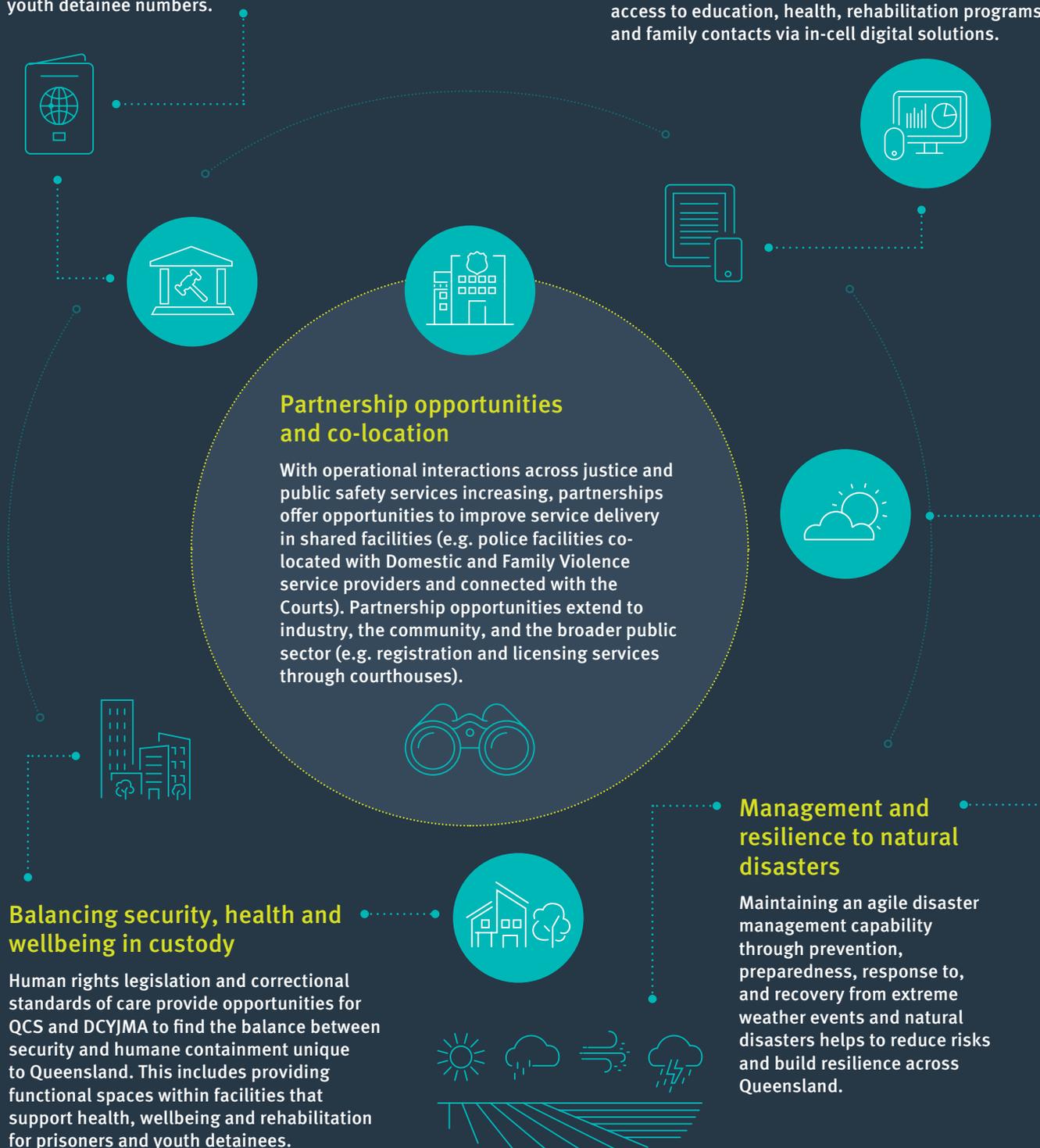
## ▼ OPPORTUNITIES

### Whole of justice system approach

Policing, courts, youth justice and corrections form a closely interrelated criminal justice system that works well when the system as a whole is well positioned to respond to demand. There are opportunities to better manage the system to address unintended impacts and bottlenecks as a consequence of increases in police interactions, court time and prisoner and youth detainee numbers.

### Continue to optimise operations through technology

E-lodgement capability exists in a limited form and presents a significant opportunity to improve court efficiency and optimise court utilisation by enabling the use of electronic files. The broader application of digital technology could improve prisoner and youth detainee access to education, health, rehabilitation programs and family contacts via in-cell digital solutions.



### Partnership opportunities and co-location

With operational interactions across justice and public safety services increasing, partnerships offer opportunities to improve service delivery in shared facilities (e.g. police facilities co-located with Domestic and Family Violence service providers and connected with the Courts). Partnership opportunities extend to industry, the community, and the broader public sector (e.g. registration and licensing services through courthouses).

### Balancing security, health and wellbeing in custody

Human rights legislation and correctional standards of care provide opportunities for QCS and DCYJMA to find the balance between security and humane containment unique to Queensland. This includes providing functional spaces within facilities that support health, wellbeing and rehabilitation for prisoners and youth detainees.

### Management and resilience to natural disasters

Maintaining an agile disaster management capability through prevention, preparedness, response to, and recovery from extreme weather events and natural disasters helps to reduce risks and build resilience across Queensland.



# JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

### 1 Adopting a whole of justice system approach (DJAG, QPS, QCS, DCYJMA)



Build a better understanding of demand and balance investments across the justice system as a whole to mitigate the unintended impacts that reforms, policing or court processing can have on other parts of the system including the capacity of correctional facilities and the capacity of the courts.

### 2 Digitisation of justice services (DJAG, QPS, QCS, DCYJMA)



Increase the use of technology to optimise court efficiency, support prisoners and youth detainees via kiosks and video conferencing to maintain access to their families, legal representatives, the courts, health services, disability support services, rehabilitation and education programs and deliver efficient and effective supervision services for offenders in the community.

### 3 Exploring in-cell technology (QCS, DCYJMA)



In-cell technology may provide an opportunity for greater access to family and friend support, rehabilitation and education programs and support services in preparation for re-entry to society.

### 4 Applying next generation public safety (QFES, QPS)



Continue to work with industry and frontline responders to design, test and apply new and emerging technologies to improve emergency responses, service delivery and make smarter, safer decisions, supporting more mobile policing services and helping firefighters detect and respond to bushfires.

### 5 Adopting digital engineering and asset management (DJAG, QPS, QFES, QCS, DCYJMA)



Adopt a more integrated approach to strategic asset planning, performance and management practices for infrastructure investment by adopting digital engineering principles and software systems, such as the use of BIM for large scale projects.

### 6 Exploring opportunities for disused land (QCS)



Explore opportunities to re-use land holdings not essential for current or planned operational service delivery.

### 7 Modernisation and DFV support (DJAG)



Investing in the modernisation of justice buildings to cater for the safety, accessibility and confidential needs of all court users including additional meeting rooms and safe spaces for DFV.

### 8 Improving prisoner and youth detainee health outcomes (QCS, QH, DCYJMA)



Improve health outcomes for prisoners and youth detainees by designing correctional facilities with features and functional spaces that support health and wellbeing, and rehabilitative outcomes for prisoners and youth detainees.

### 9 Designing interoperable, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable infrastructure (QPS, QFES, DJAG, QCS, DCYJMA)



Improve the functionality, performance, and resilience of justice and public safety facilities through innovative design maximising interoperability, cost efficiency and service capability during disasters and emergency events.

### 10 Exploring public safety co-location and interoperability (QPS, QFES, DJAG, QCS, DCYJMA)



Planning for growth and continuing to explore opportunities for joint facilities or co-location of justice and emergency services that support response and operational requirements for public safety agencies. For example, courts with police services, but also correctional and youth detention facilities with health or training facilities onsite to support prisoner and youth detainee rehabilitation.

### 11 Increasing custodial capacity across Queensland (QCS, DCYJMA)



Explore opportunities to increase custodial capacity across Queensland recognising the importance of placing youth and adult offenders as close as practicable to their families by prioritising locations that meet the needs of geographically dispersed communities, and prisoners with disability. Any increase in custodial capacity within youth detention centres will also support the movement of young people out of police watch houses.

### 12 Repurposing or reallocating based on need (QFES, QPS)



Respond to changing local operating environments with an evidence-based infrastructure operating model that better anticipates and responds to future change. Preference should be given to non-investment solutions such as repurposing and relocating facilities/equipment to areas of higher need.

**13 Utilising best available data and practices to maximise infrastructure resilience (QFES, QRA, DJAG, QPS, QCS, DCYJMA)**



Ensuring infrastructure can withstand and function during disasters or emergency situations is a key government responsibility. We will use the best available data and evidence throughout the infrastructure lifecycle (planning, designing, constructing, maintaining and disposing) to better understand and respond to disaster and emergency risks and opportunities to strengthen infrastructure resilience.



Flooding, Fraser Coast Shopping Centre (Source: Queensland Reconstruction Authority)

**INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES**



Encourage jobs, growth and productivity



Develop regions, places and precincts



Enhance sustainability and resilience



Adopt smarter approaches



# JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

## ▼ CASE STUDY

### Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court Program

The Specialist Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Court Program is a multi-agency approach committed to the continuous improvement of the justice and service system response to this growing societal issue. This remains a priority of the DFV justice reforms. Specialist DFV courts operate out of five locations across the state: Southport, Beenleigh, Townsville, Mount Isa and Palm Island. Dedicated magistrates are supported by specially trained registry staff, specialist duty lawyers and wrap around support services for all parties involved in DFV proceedings.



*Townsville DFV Courtroom (Source: Department of Justice and Attorney General)*



*Large Aerial Tanker (Source: Queensland Fire and Emergency Services)*