

# **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2022-2023**

## **Initial hearings**

### **Questions taken on notice Portfolio Committee No. 5. Regional NSW and Stronger Communities**

**Minister Maclaren-Jones**

**Hearing: Tuesday 30 August 2022**

**Answers due: Monday 26 September 2022**

**Minister Maclaren-Jones – Budget Estimates 2022-2023 – Answers to questions taken on notice**

**Question 1 - Children in NGO care - insurance cover**

**Transcript page 3 - 4**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** On page 9 of the questions taken on notice, the question is: How many children are currently in the care of NGOs that have [the Government's] NGO short-term indemnity scheme applying? That was taken on notice by the Minister. The answer is: This information is not publically available. We know that, but it sounds like you also—

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I think we may. If I can just clarify, through the Chair, with Ms Campbell?

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Please.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We haven't had any claims or notifications made since the last budget estimates hearing. The remaining providers still have cover in place and have not applied for the short-term indemnity scheme at this point but may in the near future. So 43 providers have been able to continue to provide critical out-of-home care and youth homelessness services to support vulnerable children and families.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I don't think that was the question, though. My question was how many children are in the care of NGOs that didn't have the insurance cover that actually had the benefit of the government insurance scheme? The question was how many children are in the care of those NGOs?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can take on notice the number of children.

**Answer**

I am advised:

- The short-term indemnity scheme is a voluntary scheme which provides cover to eligible out-of-home care (OOHC) and youth homelessness service providers for physical and abuse claims.
- There are approximately 3,550 children and young people in OOHC placements with contracted service providers that have joined the short-term indemnity scheme.
- There are approximately 5,300 children and young people in OOHC placements with contracted service providers that have not joined the short-term indemnity scheme.
- Some providers have not yet joined the scheme because they still have cover in place, including cover obtained from off-shore markets. These providers may join the scheme in the future, as policies expire.

## **Question 2 - Children in NGO care - short term indemnity scheme**

### **Transcript page 5**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Let's go to the next one. How many children are currently in the care of NGOs that have the NGO short-term indemnity scheme applying? We were told just a moment ago that the information is available. It was taken on notice by you. But again the information is "not publicly available". Why weren't we given an answer to that? What is the answer?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll have to take that question on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I think one of your departmental officials said she could answer. Is that the case?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can't answer today, but certainly I did say that there were 43 providers that are in this short-term indemnity scheme. So we can take on notice how many children are in those current providers at the moment.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Please do.

### **Answer**

I am advised:

I refer to my response to question 1.

### Question 3 - Top ten Out-of-Home care providers

#### Transcript page 6

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I'd like an answer to the question. I have asked the question. You took it on notice. We know the information is available; we know the department's got it. The answer that it's not publicly available is not responsive to the question. Please provide the information to the Committee. Will you undertake to do that, Minister?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm happy if you want to submit further questions; I understand that you've got limited time. But, as I said, it's a matter of checking what the question is, what data is or is not available and also verifying that is correct. But also commercial in confidence is also a key—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Minister, you've had the question since March.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Commercial in confidence is also a key part as well.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Just to be clear, Minister, I'm not asking for contractual details. I'm not asking how much they're getting paid. I'm not asking for trade secrets. I'm just asking for the list of the top 10 providers of out-of-home care. You've got the list. The names of those providers cannot be commercially sensitive. It cannot be covered by any confidentiality. Public money is going to them. We have a right through this process to ask the question as we have, and you have an obligation to answer it. Will you undertake to provide an actual answer to the Committee and provide the list?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll ask the department to comment about providing a full list of all providers rather than necessarily ranking, because again it goes into commercial in confidence. I'm not a lawyer, but it's—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** The top 10 providers. I'm not asking for the money. It's not commercial in confidence, really. It's just nonsense.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll ask the department to comment further on that.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes. We could provide the top 10. Can I just clarify, Mr Searle. Just a list of top 10 without the numbers—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Yes. The names of providers.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Names of providers.

#### Answer

I am advised that this answer was provided during the Budget Estimates Hearing (page 72 of transcript).

## Question 4 - Intervention in Child Protection matters under section 67Z of the Family Court Act

### Transcript page 7, 8-9

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It's very heartening to hear that you're taking the issue seriously and you've started looking at ways to address it. Certainly, reach out to me and my office if we can help, because we have tens of examples in our hands already of where this has occurred. I was very concerned to hear the evidence from Domestic Violence NSW, that there are hundreds of children, in their view, who have been placed at harm through the Family Court system, placed with a parent who is a known abuser or is the individual that the DCJ has identified as being the source of risk to that child. I'm very concerned that we have hundreds of children who are technically the responsibility and are under the care of New South Wales and that we are not now doing anything about because of these court orders. Do you accept, Minister, that the duty of care that the New South Wales Government has to these children overrides the Family Court process?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** What I'll first of all say is that I don't agree that we're not doing anything in relation to this. I will ask Ms Czech to go through some of the more specific details. But, again, anyone can continue to make a ROSH report, which is always investigated. Secondly, in relation to representation of families in the court process, I'll ask Ms Czech to go into some of those details as well.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Thank you. To the extent that there's information that's additional to what you gave in the inquiry?

**SIMONE CZECH:** Thank you, Ms Boyd. I will just touch on some of my evidence in the inquiry, just to echo the comments from the Minister and the secretary about quite concerning, in my view, issues of parents being unable to make a report to the helpline when they're concerned about their children. As the secretary outlined, he's taking or has taken that up, and there'll be some further work on that. As I gave evidence on Friday, a week ago, we have significant information-sharing provisions, as I outlined, which seem to be effective. Actually, two of the questions on notice we took, which I don't have a response yet for. I think the responses are due in a few days' time back to the inquiry. But those answers will be of interest to this Committee as well. The questions are: How many times do we intervene under section 67Z of the Family Court Act? How many matters have we appealed? Now, I understand the team is working through those numbers at the moment, but we have intervened in numerous matters and we have appealed matters. So, that information will be forthcoming. Unfortunately, I don't have it today. The other thing I'd just like to highlight is—and again I mentioned this in the inquiry evidence—the caseworkers that are funded by the Commonwealth that sit in the courts to provide a conduit of information sharing I think have been a godsend, as has the Lighthouse Project that's in the major courts that deal with serious physical and sexual allegations, as I understand it they are having an impact. I suppose it's continuing to leverage off those resources, make sure people are adequately trained and that that information sharing is occurring as needed. And of course, as the Minister said, every piece of information we receive, where it relates to a matter before the Family Court, we will do an assessment of that information and determine what is to happen next.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I appreciate all of that. I guess, Minister, you've not been in this

portfolio very long, so I understand that there is a certain amount of needing to go back and have a look at what's been done previously, but this is an issue that witnesses told us at the inquiry, including Ms Czech, has been at least a decade that we have known about this issue. Given that we have so many children currently being placed with an abusive parent who have been separated entirely from their protective parent and given that you do have the power to intervene, will you intervene in those cases?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I said before, I'm not a lawyer but my understanding would be if there's a court order from the Commonwealth Family Court, I would not be able to intervene, but I will double-check on that.

**SIMONE CZECH:** You know Ms Boyd, I did give evidence to this effect at the inquiry. In order for us to intervene typically the court needs to make a request to the Department of Communities and Justice. We do consider every one of those requests when we get them and, like I said, we'll provide the information as to how many times we've actually intervened in proceedings. We have also, and I think from memory Ms Ward gave an example, we've actually sometimes taken matters out of the Family Court and positioned them in the Children's Court because we were concerned about the particular way that a matter was heading. So, again, we'll provide all of that on notice.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Okay, but we still know that—sorry, it absolutely blows my mind. We heard from witnesses on 12 August that there are hundreds of these children in this circumstance, where they've been identified as being at risk from DCJ. DCJ has said the child is at risk from a particular parent. The court has then placed, in many cases, the children in sole custody of that abusive parent and our response is not to intervene. How does that happen? Why are we not getting actively involved in appealing these decisions?

**SIMONE CZECH:** I think first of all there's a difference between intervening in a proceedings before the Family Court, so that's one option we have available, and, secondly, whether we've intervened or not, our ability to actually appeal a matter once an order's been handed down. We do both of those things and like I said, I haven't got the numbers with me today, but we will provide that to the Committee. We're just finalising it, like I mentioned before.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Minister, my office sent you quite recently details of a very clear case of this, where a woman had lost custody of her children, despite her children being deemed to be at risk of the abusive parent but also deeming her to be a stand-up citizen. How is it that when I asked you to intervene in that case, you responded and said: "We are happy with the situation." I don't have the exact words, but basically "DCJ has looked into this and we don't see any need for us to intervene." That request was rejected. How can that be?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll have to ask Ms Czech to go into the specific details as to that particular case.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Without disclosing confidential information.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes. I'm unable to comment on the particular case. I'd have to take it on notice and go and have a look at, which I'm willing to do.

## **Answer**

I am advised:

DCJ cannot provide information about the specific matter referred to as section 254 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 prohibits the disclosure of information obtained in connection with the administration of that Act.

The Family Law Court Liaison Team (FLCL Team) do not provide advice to DCJ Districts upon when to intervene or not in a matter, FLCL Team will however recommend that the DCJ Districts seek legal advices and provide the Attachment 2 - DCJ Fact Sheet on section 91B – Request to intervene Final (Released by DCJ Legal Child Protection in June 2020) to assist in their decision making process.

## Question 5 - Unique Children in Alternative Care Arrangements overall in last 12months

### Transcript page 11

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Minister, I'm just going to return to the theme we were warming up with about the questions that we asked to which we didn't get an answer. One of the questions at page 70 of the answers to questions on notice paper was the number of unique children in alternative care arrangements overall in the 12-month period. Now Ms Czech said, "We can certainly provide it." Again, the answer is, "The information is not publicly available." Now does the department have this information? Yes or no?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Following the last estimates hearing, I actually have asked the secretary and I wrote to him to focus our attention on ACA numbers. The numbers—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Minister, that's not the question. The question is: Do you have the information? Does the department have the information?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** And I'm answering that question. As I was saying, the numbers of children in out-of-home care do fluctuate. On average, it can be around 100, but that is not a constant number.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** But it was asked for a 12-month period, Minister. I'm only asking for the information your departmental official said that the department had and could easily provide. My question is: Why was that information not provided to this Committee? What was the specific reason you haven't informed us?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I was trying to explain, the numbers for children in ACA can fluctuate, so it is quite often taken at a certain time, which is what was provided. But from a day-to-day basis, the data—you've got to ensure that is reliable. Any information we want to provide to the Committee has to be reliable information. I'm happy to go through ACA numbers now.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** No, my specific question was the number of unique children in alternative care arrangements over a 12-month period—not day by day, over a 12-month period. Your departmental official Ms Czech said she had the information and would provide it on notice, and you didn't. I'm asking why did you not provide the information to this Committee your department said it had?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I was trying to—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Because your answer is not responsive, Minister. It does not answer the question.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I am trying to explain now, the numbers do fluctuate from a daily or a weekly period.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** But not over a 12-month period. There will be a number. There will be a number of children. What is that number, and why will you not tell us?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll ask Ms Czech to outline from that last 12 months.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Thank you, Minister. I do have the number and I will provide it. I need to provide a bit of context to start with if that's okay.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** No, Ms Czech, you can provide the context on notice. Just give us the number.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Okay. So between 1 July 2021 and this goes up to 23 August,



which is the most recent data that we've got available this year, there were 374 children.

**Answer**

I am advised:

During 2020/21, a total of 528 children and young people had an Alternative Care Arrangement (ACA) placement, and 449 children exited an ACA.

During 2021/22, a total of 550 children and young people had an ACA placement, and 459 children exited an ACA.

For children and young people exiting an ACA in 2021/22, 76% did so within 90 days of their entry to ACA. In 2020/21, this was 71% and in 2019/20 it was 60%. This shows that significantly more children in ACA are exiting within 90 days over the last 3 years.

Additionally, children and young people that do require an ACA have high and complex needs and around 30 per cent are part of sibling groups where DCJ is focussed on keeping siblings together where possible.

## Question 6- Questions taken on notice

### Transcript page 12

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** But why did you not answer the question? You've got a department. You get all the questions on notice. You'll be provided with draft answers by the department. So my question is this: Did the department provide you with a number in a draft answer that your office then changed? Is that what happened?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As Ms Czech has outlined at the time—and I've said on multiple occasions—sometimes information is not publicly available.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** No, sorry, it was available, because we have the number now. Thank you, Ms Czech. And I appreciate there is context. Just to clarify—because I've never been in government so I don't know—when you take question on notice, or an official takes a question on notice, how does that work? The committee staff send that to your office first, or does that go straight to the department?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Ms Jackson, as I have explained—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** No, sorry. The committee staff, they send the questions on notice, they are taken on notice, who are they sent to? Mr Tidball, are they sent to you and your staff or do they go through the Minister's office?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I think we really should be focusing on the question. As I pointed out, at the time, the information was not publicly available for—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** No, it is available. So we've clarified that. This is, literally, who receives an email. You are unable to answer a question of who gets the email with the list of questions that were taken on notice?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As you can imagine, Ms Jackson, I don't do the administration in the office, so I'll have to take it on notice.

### Answer

I am advised:

Questions Taken on Notice and Supplementary Questions are provided by the NSW Parliament's Budget Estimates secretariat to my office and then sent to the department.

## Question 7 - Broadmeadows Children's Court pilot and Youth Justice supports

### Transcript page 22-23

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** What kind of additional support or expansion are you looking at? I'm asking this from the perspective of the whole of your department. This is happening in Youth Justice. I think the results can be better. I'm trying to find out how and why they're not. I say again that I'm starting from the premise of wanting them to work. But with your broader department hat on, what other supports are you looking at to assist these young people outside of just these programs?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I can't talk about future policy, but what we can say is obviously any evaluation allows you to look at the current programs, how they're working and whether they need to be fine-tuned across any part of the portfolio. But there are a number of other initiatives that we do have to support young people to divert them away from going into a corrections centre. We have the Broadmeadow Children's Court pilot, which is in Newcastle, which aims to prevent children and young people from having repeated contact with the justice system, again through a multidisciplinary approach.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** It does. Let me just start with that one. There's not a lot of information about how it's going to work. Could you give us some information about how it's supposed to work?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I might actually ask the department to go into the details of that pilot.

**PAUL O'REILLY:** The Broadmeadow Children's Court? It's an integrated case management model. When young people come before the court, the various agencies that need to provide support to those young people are there. They can work together to work with the young person and maybe their family, if they're there, to develop an integrated support plan. That gives the court rich information about what the best options might be in making their decision.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** What does that mean in practice, though? These organisations get together. Is there, say, in practice, a file on this young person?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** The difference is if you try to build an integrated case plan and the providers are not together, it's a siloed approach.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** But is that what's supposed to happen in practice? Is that the idea of this?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Generally speaking, it can be siloed. This model ensures that it's not siloed because all those people are around the table working together.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** That's literally how it's supposed to happen?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Yes.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** There's a young person who's before the court through this program and all of these other agencies are supposed to—what?—meet in practice to work out the best—

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Yes. There are a few locations where we have a similar model. We've had it in Parramatta with the "A Place to Go" program. In other local courts around the State, our staff work together with other agencies to bring them to the table on the day of a hearing or prior to a hearing to try to get that integrated case management approach across.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** How many young people have been through that so

far?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** I don't have the numbers on the Broadmeadow Children's Court participation, but it's several hundred.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Are you able to take that on notice?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Of course, yes.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Sorry, it's 700?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Several hundred, but I can get you the numbers in detail.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Just teasing out this idea of how this—again, Youth Justice is a particular part of your portfolio but I don't think it can be dealt with in isolation. In terms of other support that you're providing to assist young people before they get to this point, how?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Another one is a residential adolescent alcohol and drug rehabilitation service which operates in Dubbo and Coffs Harbour. I actually had the opportunity to visit the one in Coffs Harbour. I met with a resident who was there at the time. He was, obviously, young. Without going into too much detail, in that environment he was able to address complex needs in relation to his dependency but also various other challenges in his life. I actually saw him at the end of the program, which, I think, is about 12 weeks or so. He was then transitioned to accommodation and actually talking about what he can do to help his younger brothers.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** That's great, and I'm glad. Every single person counts; every single person who can get some assistance counts. But how many other people have been through that program? There is a very small amount of resources put into these things.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'd have to take it on notice. Sorry, no, if you've got the—

**PAUL O'REILLY:** I don't have the number. It is a small cohort overall. We're not going to see thousands of people through these programs because there are not thousands of people of that age in the criminal justice system. It really is important to focus on the quality of the work for that small number of people who need it, making sure that it responds to the evidence base, that we evaluate when we can and we improve as we go, and that young people have the support to participate in those programs. That's where all the effort is: in the quality of the work.

## **Answer**

I am advised:

The Broadmeadow Children's Court Pilot has supported 1,610 children and young people from 2019 to 2022.

The Rural Residential Adolescent Alcohol and Other Drug Rehabilitation Service supported 87 young people over the past 12 months.

## Question 8 - First Nations children under 14years old in custody

### Transcript page 24-25

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Mr O'Reilly, this is probably for you, just on a question you answered from Ms Moriarty. I think I got this right, but of the nine under 14-year-olds currently in custody—and I know one of those is 11 years and nine months—how many of those children are First Nations children?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** I shall check, but I don't think I have that information with me. Bear with me for one second.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** All right. Otherwise you're happy to take that on notice?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Of course.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Thank you. And just on that, if I can just elaborate a bit more on that for now, whereabouts are these young people? Basically, what is the population at each of the six youth detention centres in New South Wales?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Okay, I can give you that if you bear with me for one second. I have the exact figure. I don't have the figure for how many of the nine under-14s identify as First Nations.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Okay, if you could take that on notice, thank you.

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Absolutely.

### Answer

I am advised:

Seven of the nine young people under 14-years old are First Nations children.

## Question 9 - Operating costs at detention centres

### Transcript page 25

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Do you have what the current operating costs are for each of those detention facilities?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** No, I don't have the detail broken down to each of the centres.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Is that something you could take on notice?

**PAUL O'REILLY:** Absolutely.

### Answer

#### I am advised:

The operating costs for Youth Justice Centres (YJC) in the July 2021 to June 2022 period were:

Acmena YJC: \$13,035,496

Riverina YJC: \$10,907,806

Orana YJC: \$8,713,461

Frank Baxter YJC: \$29,890,880

Reiby YJC: \$15,920,943

Cobham YJC: \$32,129,022

These figures do not include the custodial operating expenses for court logistics, classification and transport or security and intelligence.

## Question 10 - Family is Culture recommendations - consultation timeframe

### Transcript page 28

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Minister, you refused to support our Family is Culture bill, along with others. One of the key reasons cited for that, I understand, was the lack of consultation. But, as you know, the bill was based on the findings of the Family is Culture review, which was based on years of extensive consultation. Experts, leaders, communities were involved. As I understand it from a discussion we've had, you intend to introduce a bill. As I understand it, it doesn't seek to implement all of the recommendations in the Family is Culture report. How do we justify that this is the appropriate way forward in terms of the much-needed legislative reform? How is it better than our bill, which I think was pretty good?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I can say that I think Mr Shoebridge came from the right place in trying to bring forward the recommendations or the legislation. Again, it was something that I personally feel that we could have looked at sooner, which is why, when I came in as a Minister, I did look at this legislation more broadly or the recommendations. It's also fair to say that the Shoebridge bill did not implement all 25 recommendations. So I actually asked Mr Thomas to go out and consult with key stakeholders and also with individuals in the community—

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Which key stakeholders?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I will get him to go through, but just the key thing is that all 25 recommendations—asking for their views in relation to implementation. Because a lot of work had already been done in relation to the Family is Culture review, the focus of this consultation was about how those recommendations could be implemented. It included the Children's Court, ACCOs, but I'll allow Mr Thomas to go through not only the stakeholders consulted but also the amount of feedback that we received.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Did this directly involve, again, AbSec and the ALS?

**BRENDAN THOMAS:** It did. There was a round of public consultations on those 25 legislative recommendations. There were 11 specific public consultations that were held in different locations around New South Wales. They involved representative organisations as well as Aboriginal community members. They were quite robust discussions about the child protection system. On top of that, we sought submissions from organisations and received just on 30 specific submissions from a whole range of organisations, from legal stakeholders to NGOs to Aboriginal organisations.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Can I just ask what time frame this was done? What was the time frame between which this was done?

**BRENDAN THOMAS:** The consultations were over April, from memory. The public submissions closed in May. I can provide you those dates on notice. From May, it was, from memory.

### Answer

I am advised:

Between late April and May 2022, Aboriginal staff within the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) ran 11 public consultation sessions across the state.

Written submissions were also invited. The consultation period closed on 27 May 2022.



## Question 11 - Young person charged, in DCJ care

### Transcript page 30-31

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** The question is: Were any individuals who are currently in Youth Justice facilities charged with murder previously known to the department or under the care of the department? It is a specific question and you can answer it.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** Thank you, Ms Jackson. I was actually trying to, before you interrupted. I was actually going to ask the department to comment further because, as it is an operational matter, it's more appropriate for them to comment on individual cases.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** It's not an operational matter; it's a yes or no question.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** That's what I'm saying. They have the knowledge and the information. I've asked the department to comment.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Do you have the knowledge or the information?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I've asked the department to comment on specific individual cases.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** I'm happy to hear from the department. But I want to know specifically from you, Minister: Was one of the people who have been charged in the care of your department?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I said, I'm referring that question to the department. Otherwise I'll take it on notice.

**PAUL O'REILLY:** I can't comment on young people's care status, but I can tell you that most of the young people involved in knife crime events are not known to Youth Justice or to the courts. But there are two young people that I'm aware of who have been charged as a result of one of those incidents who are known to Youth Justice.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Not specifically to Youth Justice but more broadly to FACS—you can refer to the department if you like.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I think it's appropriate, as it was—

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** Was one of these people in the care of the department—not Youth Justice—your broader department, FACS, at the time of this crime, alleged incident?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** That's a question that needs to be directed to the department.

**SIMONE CZECH:** We can't comment on individual matters. The numbers are very small. We risk identifying individuals. There are, as you would be aware or the Committee would be aware, children often coined as "crossover" children, who are known both to the child protection system and/or out-of-home care and Youth Justice. Like I said, in relation to a care status of a child or young person, there are provisions under the care Act, specifically section 105, that prohibit us commenting on those individual matters.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** I'm aware of the provisions and I'm not asking about names. I don't want people to be identified. There are rules in place for that, for a very good reason. But I will be specific: There is a young person who is facing a murder charge who I understand was in the care of your department. I would like to get some confirmation about that. Are you aware of that?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'll take the question on notice.

**Answer**

I am advised:

I am advised that the comments made by the Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, District and Youth Justice Services (Ms Simone Czech), during the hearing are correct. DCJ cannot comment on individual matters. Section 105 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 prohibits DCJ from commenting on individual matters.

## Question 12 - Accessible communications

### Transcript page 36

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'm going to ask you a couple of additional questions in relation to people with disability. Just in terms of accessible communications, I'm sure you will be aware of the advocacy that a lot of the disability groups have been doing around making Auslan available in Parliament et cetera. I wanted to also ask you if you've come across another issue that's been advocated for in relation to deaf jurors? This is people who are deaf or hard of hearing being empowered through Auslan interpretation or other means to participate as jurors.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I actually don't have a note on that in front of me, but I have had a brief discussion with the Disability Council in relation to this. It was brought to my attention. I will take it on notice because I believe it might come under the AG, but I want to get the facts before I go into any detail.

### Answer

I can advise:

When I attended the 5 April 2022 meeting of the Disability Council NSW, the availability of hearing loops in NSW courts was raised with me.

I am advised that the NSW Disability Advocacy Futures Program (DAFP) provides targeted funding to organisations to deliver individual, systemic and representative advocacy for people with disability in NSW.

More than \$13 million has been allocated to deliver the Disability Advocacy Futures Program in 2022/23.

Deaf Connect is funded to deliver Representative Advocacy through the DAFP. Deaf Connect is the largest whole-of-life service provider for deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing Australians.

Through the DAFP, Deaf Connect will receive \$150,000 for 2022/23 to continue its support of the deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing community.

The specific question regarding deaf jurors should be directed to the Attorney General, as the Minister responsible for courts.

### **Question 13 - Disability advocacy**

#### **Transcript page 36**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I have raised this with the Attorney as well. Again, in terms of your advocacy on behalf of people with a disability, is this something that you would be interested in advocating for?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I'm happy to do advocacy, as I said, and it has been raised with me. My understanding is the Attorney General is also looking at this matter. In relation to that, I will take it on notice and wait for further information from him in that regard.

#### **Answer**

I am advised:

See response to question taken on notice 12.

## Question 14 - Accessible digital communications

### Transcript page 39

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** What is the Government doing, Minister, to ensure that digital communications— including government websites and the like—are fully accessible for everyone in New South Wales, including people with an intellectual disability?

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I will need to take that on notice because I don't have the details in front of me.

### Answer

I am advised:

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service, as the Department of Customer Service is the lead agency responsible for government communications in NSW, including digital accessibility.

- The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) policy on 'Accessibility for Digital Communications' is proactively made available on its website here: <https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/accessibility/accessibility-for-digital-communications-policy.html>
- An Easy Read version of the policy is available here: <https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/accessibility/accessibility-for-digital-communications-policy-easy-read.html>
- DCJ is rolling out an internal education program through eLearning modules and training sessions to improve the awareness of accessible digital communications, including creation of Easy Read content for people with an intellectual disability
- DCJ has an Accessibility Hub to guide staff on creating accessible digital communications, including in Easy Read formats. The hub also links to the Digital NSW government website resources on accessibility here: <https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/delivery/digital-service-toolkit/resources/accessibility-and-inclusivity>
- DCJ proactively publishes Easy Read content for key information such as resources on the Speak Out campaign which can be found at <https://www.speakout.dcj.nsw.gov.au> and Anti-Discrimination found at <https://www.antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au/anti-discrimination-nsw/tools-and-resources/easy-read-resources.html>

## Question 15 - Closure Tomaree Lodge and Stockton Centres

### Transcript page 39-40

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Yes, a couple. Mr Tidball, we'll return to the issue of Tomaree Lodge and Stockton Centre. Mr Toomey was outlining that the two sites had been decommissioned. Last year there were still residents living at Tomaree Lodge, and they were using the toilets, showers and sinks. It sounds like the sewerage system was operational, and it was habitable last year. What has changed, and who made the decisions to make those changes? I'm also happy for Mr Toomey to answer.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I just want to make sure I understand the question. Your question is trying to ascertain whether the facility was—if it was workable a year ago, why it is not now.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Yes, why is it not now? I know Mr Toomey was enumerating the decommissioning of the two sites. I understand it was occupied last year, so it was obviously habitable then. What's happened since to make it not habitable, in a mechanical and physical sense?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I honestly am not able, and I do not have any briefing in front of me that would assist the Committee.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. Does Mr Toomey know?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** The information I have is that the sites have been decommissioned, which involved removal of all furniture; removal of non-fixed plant and equipment, including industrial kitchen fridges and appliances; removal of the hot water boilers; disconnection of power to some of the buildings; removal of the commercial gas metre; disconnecting gas to the site; capitalisation and relocation of moveable heritage et cetera. That's as I understand it.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** When did those things take place? You can take them on notice.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Clearly between when it was—I'm not trying to be cheeky, but at some point in the time since it was vacated until now. But I don't know exactly when.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Sure, but I'm asking you to take it on notice to tell us exactly when.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Okay, yes.

### Answer

#### I am advised:

Tomaree Lodge was closed when the last resident left in May 2021 and was decommissioned one-month later in July 2021. The Stockton Centre closed the year before in August 2020 however, it was decommissioned at the same time as Tomaree Lodge (in July 2021). In reference to the sewage system, a service report was commissioned in 2016, which found that both sewage systems were at 'end of life' and upgrades were recommended.

**Question 16- Electricity availability at Tomaree Lodge and Stockton Centres and cost to reopen.**

**Transcript page 40**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** But you didn't indicate that the electricity had been turned off—or did I miss that?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Removal of the gas metre, but I don't know about—there may be supply to the boundary of the site of electricity. It's probably still on the electricity main, but whether the equipment on the site could accommodate being switched back on again is the question.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Could you take on notice whether the electricity is still available to the buildings?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I think you did say something about the plumbing and sewerage. If they're not operational, have you ascertained what it would cost to make them operational again? Again, if you don't have the answer—and I assume that you don't—could you take that on notice?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I don't know what the cost is, but I do know in relation to Tomaree—I understand that the sewerage and water system was having to be consistently maintained in order to make it operational whilst the site was actually in operation, but I don't know the cost of remediation. But as I said before, any activity on the site in terms of construction activity or anything beyond the site as it currently stands would be considered to be frustrating of the Aboriginal land claim.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I understand that point.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** You presumably don't have this on you, but could you give us any information that you have about the costs associated with re-establishing the Stockton Centre, which is not under an Indigenous land claim, as a facility that could house people? As I said, we appreciate that right now they are not in a condition that could be used for temporary accommodation. It's not the Government's policy to do that and so, from your point of view, that's obviously not work that you're doing. But we're trying to explore any information that you do have about what that pathway back to a facility that people could live in—even temporarily—might look like, and the costs are obviously important.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Okay, I understand.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** In answer to a media inquiry, the department said in relation to Tomaree Lodge, "The sewerage system at Tomaree Lodge is not operational and would require significant investment". Drawing your attention to that, that presumes that at some point the department has assessed what the cost would be in order to make that claim. When you give your answer on notice, I just direct you to that.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Thank you.

**Answer**

I am advised:

The electricity is still connected at both sites., as mentioned earlier, the sewerage systems at Tomaree Lodge and the Stockton Centre are both at 'end-of-life'. No upgrades have proceeded due to the transition of all residents from both sites.

A full condition assessment would be required to determine the level of maintenance and repairs required to return the sewerage systems at both sites to appropriate operational levels. In addition, a full replacement of the sewerage system at the Stockton Centre is likely to be required to ensure it was operating at a level required for a large residential facility. In order to provide accurate costs, a full tender would be required to provide current up-to-date costings of the works.



## Question 17 – Review of responses taken on notice in last BE cycle

### Transcript page 41-42

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Could I ask this question then to Ms Czech and Ms Campbell? When you got the questions on notice, was it your advice that this information was not publicly available or did you actually provide the data that the Committee was asking for? I know it's a difficult question, but I'm asking you directly.

**SIMONE CZECH:** It is a challenging question to answer because, as Ms Jackson alluded to, there's actually quite a number of both questions on notice and supplementary questions. Sometimes, depending on the nature or the topic, it can be a joint response as well. So it's not necessarily one part of the department actually providing that response. As the secretary mentioned, there is a team that then coordinates those responses. My understanding is they don't typically write the responses. It's the business unit that does that. Their job is one of coordination and forwarding that on to the Minister's office for consideration. What was actually written in each response, I honestly don't know the answer to that question. But that's typically the process.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay because if we want it we'll ask for it. The upper House can compel the production of documents if that's what we want.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Sorry, Mr Searle, I was just going to say Ms Campbell might like to add to that.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I would really like to go back and look at the sign-off path personally. But my recollection is I didn't sign off a one-line answer. It's hard because there are lots of these that come through. But in terms of your specific question around the modelling, from my memory it was back in 2019. It was pretty basic; it was desktop. It wasn't particularly reliable. I think it was the kind of response.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Could I ask both of you to look at the questions that were on notice, particularly the ones where, I think, you, Ms Czech, said a number of times, "We have the information," and just look at what happened and maybe give us some answer on notice as to what happened and why we were given that response?

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes, I can certainly go back, as Ms Campbell alluded to as well, and have a look at the responses, Mr Searle.

### Answer

I am advised:

The department prepares responses and final endorsement is attained from the relevant Deputy Secretaries and the Office of the Secretary. Following endorsement, responses are then sent to the Minister's Office for consideration and submission to the committee.

I am further advised, as per the evidence given by the Secretary during the hearing, that he will be the final departmental sign-off for responses.

## Question 18 - Final responses for Budget Estimates post-hearing questions

### Transcript page 42-43

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes, apologies. I was going to add to my earlier response. I left a very important part of the department off that process. I understand—Michael just touched on it—it goes to the parliamentary team and then to the secretary's office before it goes to the Minister's office. I just wanted to add the secretary's office into that hierarchy, if you like.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Just on that, Ms Czech, were you aware before I started to unpack it today about those answers about the information not being publicly available, that those were the responses given?

**SIMONE CZECH:** I hadn't gone back recently to review the material that's online. Obviously, at the time when we prepare them we see the final versions.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** You saw the final version?

**SIMONE CZECH:** We do. But I hadn't recently gone back in and checked.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** But the question is: You saw the final version before it was sent to the Parliament?

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes, I would have to go back and check, but that's my memory.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** If you could and Mr Tidball and Ms Campbell if you could, on notice, give those answers also, because I think you both took questions on notice.

### Answer

I am advised:

The department prepares responses and final endorsement is attained from the relevant Deputy Secretaries and the Office of the Secretary. Following endorsement, responses are then sent to the Minister's Office for consideration and submission to the committee.

I am further advised, as per the evidence given by the Secretary during the hearing, that he will be the final departmental sign-off for responses.

## Question 19 - Social Housing Waitlist

### Transcript page 53

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Thanks, Ms Jackson. Can I just ask some basics? How many people do you currently have on the waiting list for public housing in New South Wales?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Sorry, the number was given earlier—49,000.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Sorry?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** The number was given earlier. I am just going to find it again.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think I can answer that. I've got it, Mr Toomey. There's 49,928 applicants on the social housing register, of which 5,801 households were eligible for priority housing. That's across public housing, as well as community housing.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** When you say "priority", how does the "at risk" category come into that? Is that within that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That's within priority housing.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Is "priority" all "at risk" or are there other categories within "priority"?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I might hand to Mr Toomey, but that's pretty correct. They have at-risk issues. Obviously, there's eligibility around age—which I know has been an issue recently—where a person over 80 can access the priority waitlist. But, generally, they're people who have quite a number of vulnerabilities. It could be drug and alcohol or mental health issues. It could be a whole range of things, but there's specific criteria that the housing staff use to make that assessment.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Is it fair to say the "at risk" is "priority"? It's the same thing?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, correct.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** The 49,928 applicants, how does that compare to five years ago?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We'll probably need to take that on notice, but I'm pretty sure it has reduced a bit on the general waitlist. What I think you have seen is the increase in the priority waitlist or the at-risk cohort.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Would it be okay to take that on notice, but also to do five years ago and 10 years ago?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll take that on notice and see if we've got the data from 10 years ago.

### Answer

I am advised:

The number of applicants on the social housing waiting list, as at:

- 30 June 2021: 49,928, of which 5,801 households were eligible for priority housing
- 30 June 2017: 55,949, of which 4,496 households were eligible for priority housing.
- 30 June 2012: 55,479, of which 4,931 households were eligible for priority housing.

## Question 20 - Children and older people on social housing waitlist and three strike evictions from social housing.

### Transcript page 53-54

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Do we have a figure on how many children are on the public housing waitlist?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Only as members of families, so we wouldn't have that. I would imagine we could generate that, but I haven't got it to hand.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Is that something, please, if you could take—the question goes to how many children are on the public housing waitlist. I accept that is a separate number to how many families. Again, would it be possible to take that on notice and also generate, if you can and you have it to hand, how that compares to five years ago and 10 years ago?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** The other one in this category of inquiry is how many older people are on the waiting list? I'm referring to between 60- to 80-year-olds.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Again, I'll take that on notice.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Could we also get, again, the five and 10 years? Could we also get a breakdown on gender as well for 60- to 80-year-olds currently on the waiting list and how that compares to five and 10 years ago?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Have you got the number of how many people in New South Wales have been evicted based on the three-strikes provision and whether that's still a criteria that causes eviction?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Again, I'll have to take that—yes, that is still an activity, but I'll have to take that on notice. I don't think I've got that here.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** And, perhaps, if you could give some time frames for that—how many have been evicted, say, in the past 12 months under that mechanism and, again, maybe over a five-year period as well, please? When we've evicted somebody, what do we do? Do we have any way of tracing or tracking? What do we do when someone has been so bad that they get evicted?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** If they are evicted from a social housing property, I'm actually not sure whether they remain on the social housing list or not.

### Answer

I am advised:

The number of children on the social housing waitlist, as at:

- 30 June 2022: 40,650
- 30 June 2017: 45,506
- 30 June 2012: 49,955.

The number of older people aged 60-80 on the social housing waitlist:

- 30 June 2022: 15,005, of which 7,969 were female and 7,036 were male
- 30 June 2017: 17,158, of which 9,014 were female and 8,144 were male
- 30 June 2012: 14,228, of which 7,318 were female and 6,910 were male.

Data on eviction based on the three-strike provision is not captured. In the 12 months ending 30 June 2022, the number of tenancies who were issued with a strike notice are as follows:

- 1st strikes issued: 113
- 2nd strikes issued: 39
- 3rd strikes issued: 8.

In the 12 months ending 30 June 2017, the number tenancies who were issued with a strike notice are as follows:

- 1st strikes issued: 234
- 2nd strikes issued: 86
- 3rd strikes issued: 26.

## Question 21 - Housing transfers due to mould

### Transcript page 54

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Thank you. I'm also just wondering how many transfers, if any, may have happened that relate to mould or damp in the last period for people in social housing? Whether you're aware of any or—

**JAMES TOOMEY:** There will have been. In some cases, people might have been moved to temporary accommodation whilst remediation work was being undertaken, and they have returned to their house. Again, I will have to take that on notice in terms of transfers in relation to mould or damp.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** Thank you, if you could, because it is just the mould or damp and what we're doing really in response to that more generally. So naturally social housing and public housing is one element of that. We'd be grateful for that, thank you. How many transfers, if any, have taken place because of the need for accessibility upgrades? And I know this goes, perhaps, to some of the inquiry earlier.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Again, I'll have to take that question on notice.

### Answer

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) does not capture data on tenants transferring because of mould or accessibility upgrades. Information on categories for a DCJ transfer can be found at:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/living/move-swap-transfer/tenant-transfers>

During the 2021 -2022 financial year, 66 tenants were approved for a transfer under disability grounds. For further information regarding eligibility for transfer please see:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/?a=439661>

## Question 22 - Review of data, transfer requests and DCJ spending at NCAT contesting

### Transcript page 55-56

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I just wanted to follow up on some of Ms Higginson's questions about social housing. We briefly touched on this issue of why the data in relation to waitlists is released so infrequently and ends up being so out of date, and there was a reference to the fact that auditing needs to occur on the data, that the list needs to be checked in a way, and this is consistent with evidence that DCJ provided at the inquiry into older people and homelessness. As a result of the auditing that goes on, how much does the list change or how much does the number change?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Sorry, I can't answer that question essentially because I haven't been in the role for long enough to see preliminary data then translated into verified data. I don't know if any of my colleagues can assist.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'm happy to take that on notice, Ms Jackson.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** The number that we get is quite precise, down to the individual one. We are given quite a precise number. At the end of the year, obviously a button is pressed and a figure is popped out. I want to know how different that figure is from the final figure that we receive months afterwards as a result of all of the checking that has occurred.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Okay.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How many transfer requests were received by DCJ in, say, the last year?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I would have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I asked that last time. That was taken on notice and the answer was that the information is not publicly available. I just want to obviously flag that I don't consider that an adequate response. Either you don't know or for some reason you're not able to provide that, but that would be useful. Similarly, how much does DCJ spend on contesting matters or defending matters at NCAT? Do you have that figure?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** No, I don't.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That would be useful.

### Answer

I am advised:

There were 11,316 transfer requests approved during the year ending 30 June 2022.

Between preliminary to final data, a quality assurance process is undertaken to ensure data accuracy in accordance with reporting obligations.

The assurance process is necessary for a range of reasons to ensure data integrity. For example, the assurance process helps to ensure that the data points are comparable in analysis of trends over time, and to add or adjust missing or incomplete data to correct and/or assign attribution.

Further, the finalisation of certain measures is prioritised according to business need. Data that is required to meet national and state statutory or funding agreement reporting obligations is prioritised ahead of data which is used for internal performance reporting.

I refer to supplementary question 205 for DCJ spend on cases heard at NCAT.



## Question 23 - Peak figure for temporary accommodation

### Transcript page 56

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** We might move on to temporary accommodation. How many temporary accommodation packages were provided in the past year?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** It's distorted by COVID responses, I'm afraid, so I'm just trying to find that number. In the 2021-22 year, 27,550 households were assisted with temporary accommodation.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Do you have there a figure for what the peak was at any one time?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I don't have that level of granularity, but I can—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Take that on notice; that would be useful.

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes

### Answer

I am advised:

In 2021/22, the night with the largest number of households in temporary accommodation was the night of 6 September 2021 with 2,034 households accommodated.

## Question 24 - Leaving temporary accommodation and entering homelessness

### Transcript page 56-57

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Considering the issues that we've seen in the private rental market—both the quite substantial rent increases and also the very constrained availability, particularly of low-cost rental—you obviously accept that it's not as though a lot of private rental options are available to people on very low incomes if they were just willing to take advantage of those options. In fact, by and large, they just don't exist. You can see that issue, can't you?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Certainly the constraints in the rental market are well known. I don't know the weighting, if you like, which is put on seeker diaries by teams on the ground, and that's part of what I wanted to look at and one of the things I've undertaken to look at.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That would be useful. Does DCJ collect data on where people are going when they are exiting temporary accommodation?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes, we do have data on that. We have data of what their outcomes are after leaving TA.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How people leaving TA enter a form of homelessness?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Again, I'd have to take that on notice.

### Answer

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) engaged an external consultant to undertake a research piece to understand more about what happens to clients when they leave temporary accommodation. That report is publically available on the DCJ website: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/download?file=815649>

## Question 25 - Flood support - temporary accommodation

### Transcript page 59

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Which is presumably why, even this far after the floods, there are still over 1,000 people in the circumstances that we're discussing. Will the support that you are offering them cease? Is there a time frame here in which people will no longer be able to access the temporary accommodation and the support that you're providing, or at the moment is that indefinite until their individual housing issues are resolved?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** As far as I'm concerned, it's indefinite until there is a significant situational change in their housing situation. Circumstances and opportunities might be available to people to be rehoused in the Northern Rivers.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How many of those individuals are uninsured? Do you have that?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I don't have that information. I'm not sure that I would have that information. I wouldn't even confidently take it on notice. I think Resilience or Service NSW may have that information, but I think I don't.

### Answer

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice does not capture data on how many clients in emergency accommodation are uninsured.

## Question 26 - Clients on the Together Home package but not in accommodation and outcomes for clients supported by NGOs

### Transcript page 60

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes, that's right.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That makes sense. I might just ask a couple of questions about Together Home. Obviously, there are a number of people who had packages, who were in accommodation, which was good, but there were 200 people when I last inquired who had a Together Home package but at that point, they had not been housed because a housing solution had not been found for them. Do we have an update on that figure, Ms Campbell?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can take that. Through the budget we got an additional \$18.4 million for extending tenancy support for up to 200 people from the tranche 1; I think I took you through that last time. Plus, in addition to that—I think the Minister mentioned it this morning—\$37 million for new capital for new homes, for 120 homes. Prior to that, in tranche 3, we also got \$35 million in capital for 100 new homes—so, in total, 250 new homes to come online, I think it's this financial year and next financial year. The other bit of information that I can also provide to you is that of the people that have entered the Together Home program, 440 people have been housed in long-term housing and we've continued those wraparound supports. So even though, for a number of them, they may have been in there for a few years, they had quite complex needs and needed a lot of support to ensure that they didn't exit back into homelessness.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How many people who have a Together Home package across any of the tranches, really—so they have a package—are not in accommodation now? None?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There are a couple, particularly with the sort of latter tranches where they're getting wraparound support.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I understand some of them have the package and they're getting the support services, but the accommodation part isn't there.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** That's correct.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** So there are still people in that category?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** There are.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** How many?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That would be useful. For the people in the earlier tranches, who have had accommodation and have had it for a longer period of time, have any of them re-entered homelessness?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice. I think it's very few, but there have been some circumstances that I'm aware of that people have chosen to leave those particular packages.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That would be useful. In the last round of estimates, there was a discussion around what was described as a thousand or so people who were in social housing, who were receiving some NGO support but were not on a Together Home package, because, as we know, they couldn't possibly fund all of the people who might be eligible. Has there been any follow-up on those people? Has there been any tracking on whether they are still settled in social housing or have

any of them exited homelessness?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice, but I think the Minister mentioned this morning that there was an announcement about the extension of that for another three years. I think you're talking about the STEP program—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Yes.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** —and there are a couple of different STEP programs. There's STEP A, B and C. But I'm happy to take that on notice and come back to you.

## **Answer**

I am advised:

A total of 1,092 leasing and support packages have been funded through NSW Government Stimulus funds across three tranches (T1 404; T2 400 and T3 253), total combined with NSW Homelessness Strategy funds for 35 packages for the Aboriginal-led model in the Central Coast.

As of 15 August 2022, the total number of people currently active in the program that are being housed and assisted with wraparound support are:

- 791 people housed and 938 people receiving supports.

Across tranches 1 and 2 all packages have been allocated, with some tranche 3 packages remaining.

A cumulative program figure on client exits will be available in October 2022.

The 2021/22 NSW Budget allocated additional Together Home funding, made up of \$18.4 million to extend tenancy and support for up to 200 people from tranches 1 and 2. These funds, will support tranche 1 clients who will start exiting the program from November 2022, after two years of assistance, and tranche 2 clients subsequently. The additional funds will allow for clients that need a bit of extra support to remain in the program longer.

The \$37 million for new supply of 120 homes, combined with \$35 million in tranche 3 for 100 new dwellings will provide around 250 new homes for Together Home clients to exit into long-term accommodation. Of these, approximately 51 homes are expected to be available in this financial year, and 181 in the next financial year.

To support the Together Home program evaluation, access to linked data sets across DCJ program areas, including homelessness data, will provide greater capacity to know the degree to which clients re-enter homelessness.

The Supported Transition and Engagement Program (STEP) C will be absorbed into the Together Home program. A total of 22 packages plus two high needs packages will assist clients in the Mid North Coast and Western NSW, with 12 packages in each location respectively.

STEP A and B will be extended following a \$20 million investment by the NSW Government. The program is a partnership between community housing providers Bridge Housing and Neami National, working in collaboration with Metro Community Housing and Women's Housing Company in inner Sydney.

DCJ does not record data on the outcomes of clients who have exited the STEP program and whether they have retained their social housing properties

## Question 27 - AHURI evaluation report

### Transcript page 60

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I know we've done an evaluation as well.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That was my next question—the AHURI evaluation report. Where's that up to?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice. I know there was an earlier evaluation done of the STEP program, because that's obviously informed what we did in the Together Home program, but happy to take that on notice and come back to you.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** That's right. I think that you mentioned last time, Ms Campbell, that you were expecting an interim report from AHURI on a Together Home evaluation, so it would be useful to know where that's up to and, if it's completed, whether a copy could be tabled in response to questions that you've taken on notice.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** It's just come back to me. So I understand that the interim report is coming through later this year and then a final report, I think, in June 2023, next year. And we have also remodified the evaluation, because when we brought on AHURI it was for tranche 1 evaluation, and we've got some lessons learnt from tranche 1, which we've then included in tranches 2 and 3. So we've included tranche 2 and tranche 3 in the AHURI sort of scope of engagement around the evaluation, so we can actually look at the progressive improvement for people. But, certainly, initial information is that there's some really positive outcomes from this approach for people who have previously been sleeping rough.

### Answer

I am advised:

The AHURI Together Home Evaluation is progressing.

Upcoming evaluation deliverables include:

- Interim Report by December 2022
- Systemic Issues Paper by June 2023
- Final Report, including Cost Benefit Analysis and Case Studies by June 2024.

## Question 28 - NSW Government funded food relief

### Transcript page 64

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** It's reported that Wentworth Shire Council and NSW Health are giving locals in that area the contact details for the Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council to access food relief, which is funded through the Victorian Government. Are you aware of that and is there any New South Wales Government funded food relief in that area?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I'm not aware of it.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Is anybody at the table aware of that?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I know we have through COVID provided food relief. I would just need to take it on notice—that specific location.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That'd be fine. Children's contact centres—are they entirely funded through the Federal Government or is there any State funding that goes to those services?

**SIMONE CZECH:** My understanding is it's Commonwealth funding but we can double-check that.

### Answer

I am advised:

The NSW Food Program supports food security for disadvantaged children, individuals and families and strengthens disadvantaged communities. The program funds state-wide organisations to transport and distribute low cost food and staples to local charities throughout NSW.

I am further advised, Children's Contact Services are funded by the Federal Government through the Attorney-General's Department.



## Question 29 - DCJ and LAHC recommendations report and forecast data of clients transitioning from social housing to private rental

### Transcript page 64-65

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I did want to ask about the Ombudsman's report into disability modifications. My recollection was that the Minister mentioned a task force that had been established to deal with the response to that. Are you familiar with that?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I am. The sequencing was that the investigation commenced in 2019 and the first provisional findings were issued to DCJ and LAHC in April 2021. In response to those provisional findings, a task force was set up and it ran until September to address the provisional findings and the work associated with the provisional findings. Although the task force is no longer in place, the work that it generated continues in terms of addressing the various recommendations that came out of the report. So a task force was put together at that time, which involved LAHC staff—Land and Housing staff—and DCJ staff et cetera. It completed a range of deliverable outputs, implementation of the statewide disability modification tracking register; enhanced reporting with a purpose-built monthly report on the status of modifications by location; updated the Land and Housing and DCJ exchange guidelines with supporting resources, which outlined the communication process and responsibilities between agencies and clients; updated various occupational documents et cetera—so there was that—and revised the complaint-handling process. So it got to work on the provisional recommendations at that stage, yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Obviously, we've subsequently then had the final report—not that that was that different from the interim one. So the task force is no longer operational. Is it your view that all of the recommendations have now been implemented? Is that how you would describe the status of that?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** The status is there were 27 recommendations, some of which—nine of which were joint between DCJ and LAHC, and 10 for DCJ alone, eight for LAHC alone. The majority have been accepted and either have been acted on or are being acted on. There are some where we will be going back to the Ombudsman with an alternative proposal in relation to a recommendation. One in particular which is proving a bit difficult to follow up, which is a particular apology, because we are unable at this stage to contact the person—to make contact through the person's occupational therapist, who doesn't know where the person is. We're struggling a bit with that one—which is the first one, in fact. But the others are all either in train, have already been processed through the task force, or we will be making an alternative recommendation to the Ombudsman.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Is that being monitored or managed through an action plan?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Who's responsible for—

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Me.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Is there a document that you're able to table which outlines the status of those recommendations, whether they're complete, whether they're in train, where they're up to? Is that something that you have or—

**JAMES TOOMEY:** Yes, I do have that document.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Would you table that document?

**JAMES TOOMEY:** I'll take on notice—

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** Take on notice whether you'll table the document, but it'd be useful to have it. Thank you. A couple more questions—in the budget papers, Budget Paper No. 2, page 8-17, which is the key performance insight. They were also done by cluster here. We're in the Stronger Communities cluster, obviously. It goes across all of the different bits. There are all the bits about police and all of that. Anyway, "People have a safe and affordable place to live" is outcome 4. On page 8-17, we've got the outcome indicators. This is where we get the good numbers. The 2022-2023 forecast on a number of—key number of homeless persons, people successfully transitioning from social housing to private rental. Median wait time for newly housed priority applicants—an important one. We know it's 2.2 months at the moment. "N/A" for all the 2022-23 forecasts—and then the note, "Forecast data not currently available." What's happened there? Why isn't that forecast data available?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** We'd need to take that on notice. It could've been timing—unless, Secretary, you've got further information?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** I don't know.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** A lot of the other ones, including in the Stronger Communities cluster, have—we managed to get a forecast on the number of veterans gaining employment in the public service, which is good. But, yes, nothing there? Okay. We're taking that on notice. Alright. That would be useful.

## Answer

I am advised:

In regard to the question taken on notice in relation to the NSW Ombudsman's special report, DCJ Housing has commenced actions on some recommendations from the report. Recommendations not yet commenced require scoping and/or are interwoven with and have dependencies on the outcomes of other recommendations that are in progress. For details on the actions being undertaken by DCJ Housing, please refer to Attachment 1: *Recommendations and status update to the NSW Ombudsman's special report – Modifying public housing properties to meet the needs of tenants with disability – issues identified through complaints*.

In regard to the question taken on notice in relation to the Budget Paper 2 (BP2) outcome 4 "People have a safe and affordable place to live", forecasts for 2022-23 were intended to be in the BP2 for 3 of the 4 measures, however, due to timing issues and the impact of COVID responses on the broad housing market and challenges it posed on forecasts, they were not included. Forecasts for these 3 measures will be included in the next Outcome and Business Plan. A forecast for the number of homeless persons in NSW living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out will not be able to be calculated until the release of the finalised ABS 2021 Census Estimates for Homelessness, expected in early to mid-2023.

### **Question 30 - Private rental subsidy- Start Safely and NSW Government funded food relief in the Wentworth area**

#### **Transcript page 66-67**

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** One of the rental subsidy programs—I might get the name slightly wrong here. Start Safely. Again, there is feedback that it's a good program if you can find a private rental. The subsidy makes up the difference between what the woman fleeing domestic violence can afford and the market rent. But, unfortunately, that gap is now too big. Even with the subsidy, many of the service providers that I've been talking to have reported it's just too hard. Is that something, Ms Campbell or Mr Toomey, that you have identified and are trying to ensure that the money that's allocated for those products is actually utilised?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I haven't received that information. I had a look because I thought there may be an issue there, given we were looking at the Community Housing Leasing Program and there has been an increase in pick-up of the Start Safely product compared to this time last year. But I'm happy to take that on notice to see if there is an issue being experienced.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** It's positive if you've heard that. As I said, I've just heard from some service providers that the rental subsidies are particularly useful for some people who don't necessarily experience chronic homelessness but need a subsidy, but that the gap is becoming too large. If you would, take it on notice. But it's useful to hear that it's not something that's come up strongly for you.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** To be clear, in terms of the question you just took on notice a little moment ago, I want to know whether the Government is funding food relief in the Wentworth area and, if so, which local providers are responsible for rolling it out.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Happy to take that on notice.

#### **Answer**

I am advised:

DCJ regularly reviews the Rent Choice and Start Safely policies to ensure the program remains effective. A higher subsidy can be offered in high-cost locations and targeted at approved clients who can demonstrate the capacity to afford the higher rent at the end of their subsidy period. DCJ is exploring ways to improve opportunities for clients to secure a tenancy and activate a subsidy. Key external factors make conditions in the private rental market more challenging for Rent Choice clients and may impact take-up in the program. These include higher rents, low vacancy rates and stagnant wage growth for low-income earners.

In reference to food relief I refer you to the answer to question 28.

## Question 31 - Children at risk of significant harm (ROSH)

### Transcript page 68

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Thank you for that. What is the average number of risk of significant harm reports for a child before they enter out-of-home care? Do you keep those stats?

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** Honestly, I have never come across that figure before. There'll be a question of—do we have it?

**SIMONE CZECH:** I think we can take that on notice, Mr Searle.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I'm happy for you to take it on notice. You either keep the information or you don't.

**SIMONE CZECH:** I'll have to consult with our good folk in the data area. Can I just quickly mention that an average doesn't necessarily dictate a trigger point for removal. You can get one report, and the risk assessment or safety assessment will determine a decision that a child is unsafe and lead to a removal.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Sure. It's just an interesting snapshot.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes, it's a good question.

**MICHAEL TIDBALL:** And it is a data match which we may or may not be able to do. It may be one that we need to develop.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. For children who entered out-of-home care in the past 12 months, what is the largest number of risk of significant harm reports received prior to the child being removed? That's information you would keep?

**SIMONE CZECH:** Again, we'd have to take that on notice, Mr Searle.

### Answer

I am advised:

The average number of ROSH reports received in the last 12 months for children who entered out-of-home care during 2021-22 was approximately five reports. The maximum ROSH reports received for a child was 45 reports in the last 12 months.

## Question 32 - Restorations for children OOHC 2021-2022

### Transcript page 69

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. Now, I may have missed it, but how many restorations from out-of-home care were achieved in the 2021-22 financial year?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I've only got 2020-21, so I'm happy to take that on notice, if we've got that data.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Thank you, but tell us the 2020-21 figure.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** For restoration, 488 children were restored, which was a decrease of 11.8 per cent from the previous year.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** And you'll take the 2021-22 on notice?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

### Answer

I am advised:

There were 422 children and young people restored in 2021-22, which was a 13.5% decrease from the previous year.

This decline may be due to a range of flow-on impacts arising from the response to the COVID pandemic.

### Question 33 - Permanency Support Program and Restoration.

#### Transcript page 69-70

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Thank you for that. How many children who were restored since the Permanency Support Program began—I think it was in 2017—have subsequently re-entered out-of-home care? Do you have those figures?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** No, that's fine.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Mr Searle, I can comment on that. I was only looking at some national data in the last few weeks and we will take that on notice, but New South Wales, in comparison to other States and Territories, actually has a very high rate of success as it relates to restorations. From memory, I think the figure is around 80 per cent successful restorations, so children not returning in the subsequent 12 months. Other States and Territories fare much, much worse than that. I think the issue for us is actually doing more of the restorations and getting more kids home, but we do have very good success rates currently.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Okay. What is the current number of children in statutory care with an approved restoration case plan goal?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Of course. How many of those children have been in the restoration process for more than two years? I assume that will be on notice?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I will take that on notice, yes.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** What is the average length of time from removal by DCJ to the Children's Court making a final order with a case plan goal of restoration? You may need to take that on notice also.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think we do.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yeah. You may need to clarify that question as well, Mr Searle. Just quickly, the Children's Court or the magistrate will make a determination whether there is a realistic possibility of restoration to either parent—or both, for that matter. Until that determination is made, the department can't initiate in full a restoration case plan goal, but from the time we get that decision we can certainly provide that information.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Maybe we could step it out. You could do average length of time from removal to that determination you spoke of, and then from that determination to there being an approved restoration case plan.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes. We can certainly take it on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Thank you. That would be very useful. What is the average length of time from entering into care to being restored, for those who are restored? Is that a metric you keep as well?

**SIMONE CZECH:** We do have that metric. I don't have it at hand.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** On notice?

**SIMONE CZECH:** We can take it on notice. I do know—and Ms Campbell touched on it—the time has increased and I think in the main that has been because of the COVID impact, and particularly, as Ms Campbell alluded to, families having access

to the services that they need to either resolve the issues as to why children came into care or, indeed, to get kids home safely with support. But we can provide that information.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Okay, that would be good. How many guardianship orders were achieved in 2021-22?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, I would need to take that on notice. I talked to the 2021 data earlier.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Can you tell us the 2021 data and then take the other on notice?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, I will go back to that. Sorry, this folder is very big.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** We're a long way from the paperless office, or hearing rumours the case may be.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I did have it a second ago. I'm happy to take—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I'm happy for you to take that on notice as well.

### **Answer**

Data on the average length of time from removal by DCJ to the Children's Court making a final order is not routinely collected, and requires a special report to be prepared. This report cannot be produced within the timeframe of this response.

The Department of Communities and Justice does not collect data on the timing of determination.

There were 13,151 children in statutory out-of-home care (OOHC) as at 30 June 2022. 798 (6.1per cent) had restoration as a case plan goal.

Of the 798 children who had restoration case plan goal, 320 (40.1per cent) were in OOHC for more than two years. Note that this does not mean that the restoration process took more than two years, it means that the child was in OOHC for more than two years and the OOHC case plan goal as at 30 June 2022 was restoration for these children.

The average length of time in care for the 422 children who were restored in 2021-22 was 28 months.

In 2021-2022, 375 children exited to guardianship orders.

## Question 34 - Children in statutory care with an approved guardianship plan

### Transcript page 70-71

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** What's the current number of children in statutory care with an approved guardianship case plan goal?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, I'd need to take that one on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. How many of these children have been in the guardianship process for more than two years?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll take that one on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. And, again, similar to my earlier question, what's the average length of time from removal by DCJ to the Children's Court making a final order with a case plan goal of guardianship? You might have to do it at two stages: removal to determination, about whether such a thing is viable; and then from that point to when the case plan is made. That would be very useful. What's the average length of time from entry into care to a guardianship order being made?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Please do. How many adoption orders were achieved in 2021-22?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, I don't have the 2021-22 data because that's not available yet, but I do have the 2021. I think I did say it earlier in my answer. I've just lost the note here. If you can just hang on a tick, I can have a little look. Yes, I do have it, so I can answer both those questions. In terms of guardianship orders, 451 exited through a guardianship order in 2021, which was a 7.6 per cent increase compared to the previous year; and for adoptions, 91 exited through an adoption order, which obviously is a decrease from the number in 2019-20.

### Answer

I am advised:

There were 13,151 children in statutory out-of-home care (OOHC) as at 30 June 2022. Of those, 888 (6.8%) had guardianship as their case plan goal.

DCJ is unable to calculate the number of children who have been in the guardianship process for more than two years. The average length of time from removal by DCJ to making a final order with a case plan goal of guardianship is unable to be calculated. DCJ can only determine the number of case plan goals at a certain time.

375 children exited to Guardianship in 2021-22. The average length of time in care for the 375 children was 63 months. Note that this does not reflect the duration of the guardianship process, but reflects the length of time from when the children entered OOHC to exiting to guardianship order during the year.

89 children exited care through an adoption order in 2021/22.



### **Question 35 - Children's court orders 2021-22, Out-of-Home Care and Alternative Care Arrangements.**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** How many short-term Children's Court orders were made in 2021-22?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I need to take that on notice

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Please do. How many long-term Children's Court orders to age 18 were made in 2021-22?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I will take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** What's the average length of time from removal by the department to the Children's Court making a final order? You might need to take—

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I think that goes to Simone's—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Yes, that may do.

**SIMONE CZECH:** Yes.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I think it's more the end-to-end point which might be a slightly different measure.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Okay.

**SIMONE CZECH:** We can certainly take that on notice as well

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** What is the average length of stay from first entry into care for children currently in out-of-home care? You might need to take that on notice.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'll take that on notice

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** What is the minimum and maximum duration in care for children who are currently in out-of-home care?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Again, I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** That's okay. The number of children in residential care I think has increased over the past year. What is the increase in expenditure on residential care as a dollar figure and as a percentage?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I'd need to take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Okay, that's fine. In addition to residential care providers funded under the Permanency Support Program, I think that it's also providers under pre-2017 contracted arrangements. How many of those arrangements remain in place and how many children are in their care?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Are you talking about how long the children that entered when the Permanency Support Program—

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** How many of the pre-2017 contracted arrangements are in place and how many children are in the care of those organisations?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I can take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Please do. I think there are now four additional out-of-home care residential care models in addition to the two original models. That's the intensive therapeutic care and intensive therapeutic temporary care. How many children are currently in each of the six placement types that you currently operate?

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** I might have that here.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I think there's alternative care arrangements, individual placement arrangements, short-term emergency placements and the interim care model as well as the first two.

**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, and there's one for children with disability, significant disability. Look, I'll take that on notice.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** If you could, again, break it down by each care type.  
**ANNE CAMPBELL:** Yes, we can do that.

**Answer**

Data on the number of short term children's court orders is not available in a readily accessible format and is not remediated or aged appropriately.

Data relating to residential care placements and expenditure is not reliably available. The mean length of time in out-of-home care (OOHC) for the 15,223 children in OOHC as at 30 June 2022 was approximately seven years.

Children in OOHC as at 30 June 2022 can be in OOHC for less than a month (those who entered OOHC in June 2022 for example) and the maximum is up to <18 years.