

# The Hon Kate WASHINGTON MP

## FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, AND DISABILITY INCLUSION

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| 1               | 5                 | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> What are the number of ROSH reports that have been closed because of competing priorities?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I can get that figure to you. But can I just say that cases that are closed due to competing priority, there are—with children that are screened as being at risk of significant harm, it does not mean that those cases have not been assessed and determined as to their level of risk. If there are children not seen or cases closed due to competing priorities—I have sat in some of the community services meetings where they are looking at all the cases that have come to them, and a significant amount of work goes into determining whether or not a particular child is, at that time, considered at risk or whether there are other services, like education or health or other services in the community, that are available to them to ensure that there are enough services and support around that family and that child to ensure that they are safe.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Minister, you said that you have that available data as to the number of cases that have been closed. Do you have that figure available now?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I might just refer—</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We will need to take it on notice.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> We will have to take that one on notice.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>Please refer to the response provided in the hearing which can be found on page 71 of the transcript.</p> |

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| 2               | 8                 | The Acting Chair       | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Since you have become Minister, how many Aboriginal children in out-of-home care have actually now been transitioned from NGOs to ACCOs?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> The short answer to that is: not nearly enough.</p> <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Is that something you could take on notice in terms of the actual amount or something you could get back to me? Because I know it's not nearly enough, but it would be good to get an idea and an indication of what we're talking about.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> The figure is quite shocking and it shocked me when I found out. It's less than 20 since we came into government.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Since 1 April 2023 to 29 February 2024, there have been a total of 13 transfers from NGOs to ACCOs.</p>   |
| 3               | 23                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> If I could just take you to programs that are discontinuing, I refer to supplementary question No. 49. It refers to exits from out-of-home care to homelessness services. I understand that the answer says the department is working to improve the transparency of this data. I am just checking when we may have more data available on that, which is the transition from out-of-home care to homelessness services?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Ms Merton, data capture is something that I've actually been quite concerned by on a number of different areas where we haven't been capturing data. This is one of those. Coming into government, we learnt that there wasn't data captured about children in out-of-home care and their engagement with schooling. There wasn't data capture about where children, if they're not seen by the department, if other services are providing those services instead. We haven't got data capture on that; we haven't got visibility. In terms of exiting out-of-home care to homelessness services, again, this is an important area that we need to understand better, so data capture is something that we are working on.</p> <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Is there a time frame we are working on</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>The Youth Initiative (YI) supports young people leaving out-of-home care (OOHC) who are at risk of homelessness upon exit from care. YI provides a range of services to divert this group from entering the homelessness service system. DCJ funds 10 service providers to deliver this support.</p> <p>As at 31 December 2023, there were 410 young people receiving YI support to transition from OOHC to independent living. Of these, 109 were living in subsidised or DCJ funded accommodation to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>DCJ continues to look at ways to improve the data quality in the specialist homelessness services data collection, with a focus on children and young people.</p> <p>In August 2023, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) introduced additional data quality enhancements, based on the age of the client. Improvements will be reflected in 2023-24 data, which will be available in December 2024.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                         | <p>this? We can operate on ad hoc feedback from providers we go and meet ourselves that report this, but in terms of the integrity of some data on this, is there a time frame? What do we say?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I might refer to Ms Campbell to see whether she can provide further information to you on that.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> There are probably two issues there. You would recall the More than Shelter report that the Ombudsman did many years ago. One of the recommendations from that was looking at a dashboard to track children that are in out-of-home care and the children that were in specialist homelessness services from 12 to 15 years of age. We provided a draft of that dashboard to the Ombudsman for their review, to see if it meets that particular recommendation. In terms of the other data, in terms of children leaving out-of-home care and going into homelessness, I'd need to take that on notice. But I know we do have some data on that. We obviously fund, through Minister Jackson's area or portfolio, things like the Youth Initiative et cetera, which really target young out-of-home care leavers.</p> |  |
| 4               | 38                | The Hon. Tania Mihailuk | <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Minister, I will ask a couple of quick questions on the NDIS too. I'm someone that has been very familiar with the system of the NDIS and indeed disability care in New South Wales for a very long time. I accept what you've just said. Certainly the Government has just received the review—the Federal Government that is—and it is a staged process on how they will respond to that. There will be, I think, significantly more pressure put back onto the States to provide that broader holistic care for people with a disability. Have you started the process within your own department and your own office of looking at how the State can re-enter the place of providing care for disability in New South Wales, because, as you know, post-2009 the then Labor Government moved itself away from having any public involvement or government involvement with providing holistic disability care in New South</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>The Hunter NDIS trial site commenced from July 2013 with the first stage being for people living in the Newcastle local government area. The NSW transition to the full scheme agreement was completed in 2018.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>Wales. I'm just wondering how you're going to go about this because it's more than just disability inclusion. A lot of properties were handed over to the NGO sector, for example, and there has been a very clear reliance on the Federal Government in that space for funding, that is.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> It's a very—</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Sorry, it's a broad—</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> —broad question and I just wanted to go back to the element where you referenced since 2009 that there has been a walking away from the State</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Yes, DADHC handed over a lot of its department responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> It was certainly not 2009. It was closer to 2012-13, I believe.</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Sorry, the process started in 2009.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I think the process started with the trial in the Newcastle area, from memory, but I can take that on notice and come back.</p> |   |
| 5               | 40                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> In relation to a supplementary question in relation to school attendance, you stated that from 23 July DCJ has received monthly school attendance rates for all school-age children who are enrolled in New South Wales public schools and are under your responsibility and that by 24 February you'll have all the rates for 2023. What is the annual attendance rate?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> From the information that we've managed to gain that wasn't information that was ever captured before—and this is obviously new data that we are now seeking to capture—we understand it's around 80 per cent, but I can take it on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>School aged children are required by law to be enrolled in and attend school. School attendance information is stored in individual case files, DCJ is unable to extract this information on a state-wide level.</p> <p>In mid-2023, an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DCJ and the Department of Education (DoE) for information sharing with respect to children and young people under the parental responsibility of the Minister (PRM) who are enrolled in NSW public schools, was amended to allow for more information to be shared by DoE with DCJ.</p> <p>Raw attendance data for the 2023 school year is currently being cleansed and analysed by DCJ.</p> |

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| 6               | 42                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Thank you very much. I want to begin in relation to the child death review that was tabled earlier this year. I understand there were 111 deaths of children known to the department. Is that correct?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Correct.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> How many of those had open cases with DCJ?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We would have to take that question on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>This data is publicly available in the Child Deaths 2022 Annual Report, tabled in the NSW Parliament in November 2023.</p> <p><a href="https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/852083/Child-Deaths-2022-Annual-Report.pdf">https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/852083/Child-Deaths-2022-Annual-Report.pdf</a></p>  |
| 7               | 42                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Looking at the report—and we know that suicide is, unfortunately, one of the leading causes of death for many young people between 13 and 17—of the 111 children known to DCJ, do you know how many of those died from suicide?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> In the '21 calendar, 15.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Yes, there were 15 in 2022, because it's always 12 months behind.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> How many of those children had siblings?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'd have to take that on notice.</p>  | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>Refer to the answer provided to question taken on notice 6.</p>  |
| 8               | 43                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> At what stage is a decision made that DCJ no longer needs to be involved with that family?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> That'll vary from case to case. A decision not to conduct a face-to-face assessment or a safety and risk assessment will be made, typically, within a day or two of receipt of that report. In the event we are not taking further action, a director community services, which is one of our executive staff, is delegated to close that case without a face-to-face assessment. On other matters, it'll depend on the individual circumstances. For example, if we go out and conduct a safety assessment, we may deem the siblings to be unsafe and bring those children into care. We may deem those children to be safe and there's no further action, so it'll vary from one case to the next.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Have any of those cases been</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>Of the 15 children who died by suicide in 2022, only two of these children had an open case with DCJ at the time of their death.</p> <p>Their cases remained open while support was offered to family, carers, and other children in the placement, and were not closed due to competing priorities.</p> <p>None of the other 13 children who died by suicide in 2022 had an open case at the time DCJ was advised of their death.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                                 | closed because of competing priorities or caseworker workload?<br><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Not that I understand, but we can take that on notice and just double-check that.   |  |
| 9               | 43                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> In relation to the number of young people who died from suicide, do you have the figures for how many of those were Aboriginal?<br><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I think we might have to take that on notice. Of the 112, thirty-eight were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children. But that specific cause of death—we might see if we can get that during the course of the afternoon   | I am advised:<br>Refer to the answer provided to question taken on notice 6.   |
| 10              | 45                | The Hon. Rachel Merton          | <b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> If I could just pick up an issue that I raised in the previous estimates, which was relevant to the return to work. I was making mention at that time of the Premier's call for public servants to return to the office. We spoke about that relating to the department and non-caseworkers. I'm just wondering whether we may have an update about the call for the return to work in terms of what that has meant for the department in terms of where non-caseworkers are working from the office and possibly how many have returned to the office full-time.<br><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Ms Merton, I have no data to hand. Anecdotally, I must say, when I go to Parramatta, what I do see is an increasing presence in the office. In terms of any data that we may have of non-casework staff, I'm not sure that what we have—I could possibly take that on notice, unless any of my colleagues are able to supplement what I've said. | I am advised:<br>Data on staff working from home is oversighted by management locally. It is not stored in a system that can be extracted centrally. |
| 11              | 45                | The Hon. Rachel Merton          | <b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Does the department track this in terms of where staff are working— in terms of whether it's from the office or remotely—specific to non-case working staff, that's all? Is it tracked? Is it monitored? It is recorded? Can we see something like any trends<br><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We do not, to my knowledge, track it. There are  | I am advised:<br>Refer to the answer provided to question taken on notice 10.  |

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|                 |                   |                        | data collection points. What that would mean in terms of tracking, I do not know and would need to take on notice   |   |
| 12              | 45                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Relating to those staff and the community services centres and the joint offices, how many offices would the department occupy across New South Wales in terms of regions?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> It's 79, isn't it?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> There are 79 community services centres. We'd have to take on notice to get an accurate figure of the number of district offices and other offices we may have. I think we have that data available so that shouldn't be an issue.</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>There are 86 Community Services Centres and district offices across NSW.</p>  |
| 13              | 46                | The Acting Chair       | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> What I'm after as well is the age band of the First Nations children in high-cost emergency arrangements and also the type of that emergency arrangement. And what is the average or median duration of stay in those arrangements? They're the things I'm—</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We're happy to take those on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>As at 28 February 2024, of the 434 children and young people in a High-Cost Emergency Arrangement (HCEA), 193 of these children/young people were Aboriginal.</p> <p>A breakdown by HCEA placement type and length of stay data is provided below for these Aboriginal children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46 in an ACA, with an average length of stay of 210 nights. The youngest Aboriginal child was 4 years, the oldest 17.</li> <li>• 89 in an IPA, with an average length of stay of 273 nights. The youngest Aboriginal child was 1 year, the oldest 17.</li> <li>• 20 in STEP, with an average length of stay of 150 nights. The youngest Aboriginal child was 11 years, the oldest 17.</li> <li>• 36 in ICM, with an average length of stay of 207 nights. The youngest Aboriginal child was 3 years, the oldest 15.</li> </ul> <p>The number of Aboriginal children in Special OOHC is too small to report without being easily identifiable.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                                 |  | Note: this is operational data, correct at time of extraction and may vary from aged data sources.  |
| 14              | 50                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a breakdown, of the last 12 months of how many cases have taken longer than 12 months, longer than 18 months?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'm sure we could take that on notice and see if we could get that information</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>As at 14 March 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of matters before the Court is approximately 1400.</li> <li>• The number of matters that have been before the Court for longer than 12 months is 303.</li> <li>• The number of matters that have been before the Court for longer than 18 months is 185.</li> </ul> |
| 15              | 51                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I might move to caseworkers. Do you have a breakdown of length of service—so the number of years that caseworkers, by district, have been employed?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We don't have that on us.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Bear with me for one moment.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Oh, I think Ms Czech is optimistic.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Ms Czech always has the information.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I've got too many bits of paper. Okay, I have both age representation and tenure representation. There's quite a lot of it. Do you want me to rattle through it?</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I'm happy for you to table it. I'm interested to know if you've got the number of employees by district and then the length of service. You don't have to include their age.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'm not sure. I have seen age data before, but I don't think I've got that with me today.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We've certainly got numbers by district with us today; age, I do not have.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I don't need the age but length of service.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> This is sort of upside down, but in terms of tenure—</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>Refer to <b>Attachment QTON 15.</b></p>  |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>and this data is for 2022-23: less than a year, 15.1 per cent; one to two years, 11.5 per cent; two to three years, 7.4 per cent; three to five years, 16.2 per cent; five to 10, 23.4 per cent; 10 to 15, 8.7 per cent; 15 to 20, 11.7 per cent; and 20 to less than 30, 5.1 per cent. You can see the bulk of our caseworkers, as far as tenure, is in that middle three- to 10-year period. In terms of attrition, what we know is if you're going to leave the organisation you typically leave within your first two years of tenure. We've got an incredible effort to support our new caseworkers to try and mitigate the risk of them going in that first two years because what we find, and it's demonstrated by the data, is that if you hit the two-year mark, you stay—also, wanting to give caseworkers different opportunities where we can to make sure that they are able to refresh, because this job is hard. It's rewarding but, as you know, it's incredibly challenging as well. There's a range of supports in place not just for the first two years but post that period of time as well.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> In relation to the district breakdown, do you have that as well?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I haven't got that with me but we can certainly provide that on notice, if that's okay?</p> |   |
| 16              | 52                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Okay. There's a current vacancy across the State in relation to caseworkers, so even if you wanted to fill them you currently can't fund them?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> No, they're funded to the 2,333 number but we've got less. We've got the money.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes. Just in relation to whether or not any caseworker salaries have increased in relation to the wage caps being removed last year?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> All caseworkers, like public sector workers, received the 4 per cent wage increase.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Can you quantify that amount for 2023-24?</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>All employees under the <i>Government Sector Employment Act 2013</i> within the Department of Communities and Justice and agencies are paid in accordance with the relevant Acts and Awards.</p> <p>In June 2023, the NSW Government took the first steps towards recognising the valuable work of our essential workers with the largest pay rise in more than a decade by providing a 4.5 per cent pay increase to public sector employees in 2023-24.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Do you mean in aggregate?</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Can we take that on notice?</p>   |  |
| 17              | 53                | The Hon. Rachel Merton          | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Ms Campbell, if I could just pick up. We were speaking about the national ministerial forum discussions relating to the prevention of child sexual abuse, and you mentioned about the discussions continuing from that. I'm just checking. Were there any time frames as to when outcomes, resolutions or agreement was hoping to be reached on some of these issues?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> There are quite a number of issues that that particular council's dealing with but I'm happy to take that on notice and provide any information we have in relation to time frames from the Commonwealth.</p>                    | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>A summary of outcomes of the 24 November 2023 Ministerial Forum on Child Safety is available on the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department website: <a href="https://ministers.ag.gov.au/media-centre/outcomes-ministerial-forum-child-safety-24-11-2023">https://ministers.ag.gov.au/media-centre/outcomes-ministerial-forum-child-safety-24-11-2023</a></p> <p>Agreed reforms will be progressed as part of the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030.</p>   |
| 18              | 53                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Can I just jump in there? In relation to the sharing of data between DCJ and Education, obviously we've got it now for the number of young people in out-of-home care who aren't attending school. What other data is being shared?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that on notice. We've only just recently actually got that data. It came through, I think, last month or even earlier this month, so we're doing a bit of cleansing of that data as well. From my understanding, that was very preliminary data, so we'll have a better picture, and that's specific to out-of-home care, obviously.</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>School aged children are required by law to be enrolled in and attend school. School attendance information is stored in local case files, DCJ is unable to extract this information on a state-wide level.</p> <p>In mid-2023, an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DCJ and the Department of Education (DoE) for information sharing with respect to children and young people under the parental responsibility of the Minister (PRM) who are enrolled in NSW public schools was amended to allow for more information to be shared by DoE with DCJ.</p> <p>Raw attendance data for the 2023 school year is currently being cleansed and analysed by DCJ to inform strategies to increase school attendance rates.</p> |

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| 19              | 53                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Definitely. I'm also interested in young people who've been suspended and, obviously, all those things that identify that more support needs to be given.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that on notice and see what's collected</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Data on student suspensions is stored in individual case files, DCJ is unable to extract this information on a state-wide level.</p>  |
| 20              | 55                | The Acting Chair                | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Is there anything that has triggered the need to go back and look at matters that may have not gone as well or appropriately as they should have in court proceedings, possibly because of the reliance on misinformation?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Again, there are matters that come to my attention, not just because of misinformation but maybe some practice issues as well. I think there have been magistrates that have raised practice issues previously, or I may become aware of a practice issue, for example, through a complaint. One of the important roles our Office of the Senior Practitioner plays is a review function. Any time there's a criticism from a magistrate, it triggers a review by the Office of the Senior Practitioner. We'll do that review in collaboration with the non-government organisation, and we have done many reviews over the last little while. That review will ultimately result in a range of recommendations that we then follow up with the respective NGO and, again, feeding that through to the contract manager as well, and the Office of the Children's Guardian.</p> <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> What's the volume of concerns that may have been raised by the magistrates?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We'd have to take that on notice and provide that to the Committee.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>As at 14 February 2024, there are 21 active matters at court where Magistrates have formally raised concerns with DCJ. 13 (62%) of these concerns relate to non-government service providers. This includes matters where the concerns were raised several years ago, however the matters are still ongoing at court.</p> |
| 21              | 55                | The Acting Chair                | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> I'd be really interested to know, in a 12-month period, what we are talking about in terms of those concerns?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Yes, happy to take that on notice</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Concerns relate to child placement, jurisdictional concerns when children are placed interstate, disagreements related to timelines and/or the quality of information provided to the court in relation to practice and decision making.</p>  |

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| 22              | 55                | The Acting Chair                | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Recognising that the court is a good forensic environment so, if there are, it's probably a good place to see and focus on where those concerns come from and what they are. I think it was in the FIC progress report in relation to—just on complaints—recommendation 10, the Ombudsman had the Aboriginal Assistant Ombudsman, George Black laws, and he is no longer there. In the report it stipulates that that part of the work had been taken up by an external consultant. I'm just wondering if any of you are aware of who is that external consultant. It might be something I could find on the Ombo's website, but I didn't have an opportunity to have a look.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'm certainly not aware of who that might be. I do know from Ms Campbell and I meeting with the Ombudsman on a regular basis that they were still drafting the report, but there wasn't a time frame, from memory, that they could provide to us at this point in time.</p> <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Would you perhaps take that on notice and, if it is appropriate to respond, just say who is the external consultant who has undertaken that work?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Yes, of course, we can do that</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>The NSW Ombudsman has employed an external consultant Mr John McMillan AO, the previous Commonwealth Ombudsman, and previous Acting NSW Ombudsman.<br/>Implementation of Family is Culture Recommendation 10 will be led by Mr McMillan.</p> |
| 23              | 58                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I've just got one question. In relation to Your Choice, Your Future and the number of young people that have taken that up, what work has been done to engage more young people to take that on?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> In terms of the numbers for 2023-24, the budget is \$21.8 million for this financial year: 18.9 for allowances and 3.1 for the specialist aftercare service. I will just turn to my note; I have a breakdown of the two different categories. The grand total as of now is 1,730 children and young people, and the breakdown for Independent Living Allowance is 1,178 and the Staying on Allowance is 552. As at December 2023, 1,469 care leavers were benefiting from the allowances. So 989 were receiving Independent Living Allowance and 480 carers were receiving the Staying on Allowance. We have</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Timeframes for the Your Choice Your Future Evaluation are currently being developed. It is anticipated that the evaluation will commence in the second half of 2024 and be completed in 2026.</p>  |

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|                 |                   |                        | <p>also, obviously, done some modelling to look at what we thought when we did the modelling originally, the number of young people that would be accessing that particular program. The data indicates that about 650 young people aged 18 to 20 remain eligible but have not yet applied for these particular allowances. We are following up with those young people to make sure they get the entitlements that they need.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I'm mindful that young people do various different things, but is there any research as to why they haven't taken it up, or is it purely that they just haven't been tapped one way or another to know it's there?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> It is hard to know, but that is something we would be looking at to understand better those young people that don't take up either of those two allowances. I think we thought it would be a little bit higher in the Staying on Allowance, but again it is still pretty early days and we need to make sure that we're working with young people earlier, before they leave out-of-home care, to make sure they get the information they need in terms of what's available to them.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> From memory, there's an evaluation that was built into the original announcement. When does that commence, or when is it due?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that on notice to give you some more specific information. But, yes, there is an evaluation of that particular program.</p> |  |
| 24              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> If I could just touch on the targeted early intervention, in 2023 how many individual clients has the Targeted Earlier Intervention program seen?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> In 2022-23, 170,229. That is an increase from 2021-22, which was 133,945.</p> <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Ms Campbell, how many of these clients were Aboriginal?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'll just see if that's in my note. I think quite a</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>In 2022/23, 26,091 Aboriginal clients accessed the TEI program.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                        | <p>percentage—at least 30 per cent, from memory.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> It is 30 per cent.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> Good, there you go. You're talking about the clients accessing the program, as opposed to the target</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Yes, that's the target. The target is 30.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that on notice.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Yes, need to take that on notice</p>  |   |
| 25              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Second to that, how many were Aboriginal children?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'm not sure if we've got the breakdown of that detail, but I'm happy to take that on notice.</p>  | I am advised:<br>In 2022/23, 6,392 Aboriginal clients aged 0-9 years accessed the TEI program.  |
| 26              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> In terms of location, what sort of local government areas saw the most clients relating to this?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> It would probably link to where the demand is and what the population is. But, again, I'm happy to take that on notice if we've got that information</p>   | I am advised:<br>In 2022/23, the three local government areas with the largest number of individual TEI clients were: Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown, and the Central Coast. |
| 27              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> The Aboriginal Child and Family Centre enhancement program also ends on 30 June 2024. It delivers onsite allied health services and training opportunities for Aboriginal community members in the allied health field. What will happen to the program after 30 June?</p> <p><b>CLAIRE BEATTIE:</b> As you know, we have nine existing ACFCs across the State. We also have funding to extend six more and funding to maintain the nine that are existing. My understanding is, right now, we're going to be looking at what other sites we might build the additional six on, working with ACCOs. I'm proud to say that currently the ACFC program is 100 per cent ACCO. It is one of those areas where we are doing this a 100 per cent with Aboriginal people.</p> <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> In terms of the current providers that are on contracts now that will end on 30 June, I am checking what's next in terms of my reference to allied health services?</p> | I am advised:<br>Aboriginal Child and Family Centre (ACFC) contracts for the current nine providers have been extended to 30 June 2028.                                       |

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|                 |                   |                        | <p><b>CLAIRE BEATTIE:</b> I might take that on notice, but it's my understanding that the program is continuing, if not being extended, with six new centres. I will take that on notice.</p>   |  |
| 28              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> If I could touch on—this morning we had the announcement by the Minister of Stockton being made available for homeless accommodation. What is the current state of the Stockton housing dwelling? How does it represent today?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> My understanding is there needs to be some works done to it. I think Land and Housing Corp are proceeding with doing those works.</p> <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Are there any more specific concerns relating to amenities and the sewerage system concerning Stockton?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that one on notice</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Following my visit to the site shortly after being sworn in as Minister, seven houses were identified for 'meanwhile use' at the Stockton Centre. These houses are in good condition, despite the former government and former minister claiming otherwise. Minor works including furniture and fittings were needed to meet the occupation requirements for transitional accommodation.<br/>There are no concerns about the sewerage system related to these seven houses.</p> |
| 29              | 60                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Ms Campbell, I'm just asking that because I was aware of a reported history related to the cost of restoration of the sewerage relating to that property and consideration that was given to that. Is there anything further? Has anything changed on that?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'd need to take that on notice, but I think you may be talking about the main facility, which isn't currently being utilised. From this morning I know there was a question about when the transfer commenced in New South Wales. The NDIS was signed in 2012 and was legislated in 2013. There was then the Newcastle trial in 2013 and then the rollout of the transfer of specialist disability accommodation from government. So the ADHC—Ageing, Disability and Home Care—department to the NGO sector in preparation for full-scheme NDIS was July 2016 to June 2018.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>Refer to the answer provided to question taken on notice 28.</p>  |

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| 30              | 60                | The Hon. Rachel Merton          | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> In terms of the announced new homelessness accommodation at Stockton, do we know anything more about who is going to be managing this accommodation service?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> My understanding is a community housing provider. I can't recall the name, but I can get that on notice for you.</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Community Housing Provider "Home in Place" will manage the seven houses as transitional accommodation under 'meanwhile use' arrangements at the Stockton Centre.</p>  |
| 31              | 60                | The Hon. Rachel Merton          | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> Ms Czech, just confirming that the cultural support plans—the development implementation was one of the outcomes and nine actions were reached on that. Is there any detail—</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> No, sorry, Ms Merton. No, it wasn't one of the nine actions.</p> <p><b>CLAIRE BEATTIE:</b> The nine actions were to increase restoration via a taskforce, review risk assessment tools, assess over-reliance on removal powers, involve Aboriginal people in decision-making, partner with ACCOs, improve family meeting process and establish the MAP Group—that is my understanding. But we'll take that on notice if you'd like to know the exact nine. That's just my understanding—oh and to look at DCJ in terms of anti-racism and racism within DCJ.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>The nine commitments from the Aboriginal Child Safety and Wellbeing Forum are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a Ministerial Aboriginal Partnership Group (MAP Group) with Aboriginal stakeholder and community representatives, to oversee the redesign of the child protection system for Aboriginal communities.</li> <li>2. Increase restoration of Aboriginal children through a restoration taskforce.</li> <li>3. Review the use of the Risk Assessment tool.</li> <li>4. Address the overreliance on emergency removal powers.</li> <li>5. Involve Aboriginal people and communities in decision making about Aboriginal children.</li> <li>6. Partner with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to rapidly reduce the number of Aboriginal children in high-cost emergency arrangements, like hotels and motels.</li> <li>7. Improve family meeting processes.</li> <li>8. Invest more in the Aboriginal sector and accelerate the transfer of case management responsibility to ACCOs of children in OOHC.</li> <li>9. Acknowledge and address racism and increase satisfaction of Aboriginal staff in DCJ.</li> </ol> |
| 32              | 61                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I want a breakdown of the number of young people in each service type within the high-cost emergency arrangement?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Yes, I do, if the extract from which I'll quote is 29 February. The total, as I believe has been explained in earlier</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>The average costs per child per HCEA placement type between January 2023 and January 2024 is summarised in <b>Attachment QTON 32.</b></p>   |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>evidence, is 434 and the breakdown—and I'm assuming these are the categories you're after—ACA is 76; IPA, 198; STEP, 51; Special Care, 16; ICM, 93.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a costing for each of those—how much it cost for the 76?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> An average cost, do you mean?</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes, under each of those categories or service areas.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> I don't believe I do with me. Ms Merton, I think I'd need to take that on notice. I certainly don't have it with me in my folder.</p>   |   |
| 33              | 61                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I might move on. In relation to the number of children subject to a substantiation of abuse in out-of-home care, do you have the 2023-24 figure, or the latest one?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> If you will just bear with me for one moment, I think I do have that. The 2022-23 reporting period we have.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Those with the substantiation was 4.6 per cent, or 787 children. I think it's important to note the allegations contained in those reports could be about the placement, but they could have been things reported, or concerns that came about, prior to the child coming into care and sometimes it's hard to differentiate between the two. But, nevertheless, 4.6 and 787 children.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> That's actually quite an increase since 2022-23.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> No, it's actually a decrease. The previous year, 2021-22, was 853 children, 4.8 per cent.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I've got the 2022-23 figure as 654.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I would have to take that on notice to check. They're not the figures that I've got.</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>The figure quoted by Ms Maclaren-Jones of 654 children being the subjects of substantiation of abuse in care in 2022-23 is data yet to be published in the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Safety in Care Report.</p> <p>The figures quoted by Ms Czech in the March Budget Estimates hearing relate to data published in the Report on Government Services (ROGS) in January 2024.</p> <p>There are two measures published in the ROGS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of children who were subject of abuse in care. As reported by Ms Czech, this number is 787 (4.6%) in 2022-23 and 853 (4.8%) in 2021-22.</li> <li>2. The number of children who were the subject of abuse where the person responsible was living in the household. Ms Czech added to her earlier response at the end of the day by also quoting these figures- 556 (3.3%) in 2022-23 compared to 546 (3.1%) in 2021-22.</li> </ol> <p>The AIHW and ROGS figures use different national counting rules. Discussions are under way to resolve this discrepancy.</p> |

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| 34              | 62                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Where a young person is meant to transfer to an ACCO but, for one reason or another, has not. I'm just asking if there have been any cases that you're aware of.</p> <p><b>CLAIRE BEATTIE:</b> I'm sure that there could be. We will take that on notice. What we do know, generally, is that there are some places around the State—so western New South Wales or far western New South Wales—where there is no ACCO. Unfortunately, there is nowhere for that young Aboriginal person to be transferred to. We also know that there has been some tension around carers who have been with an organisation, an NGO, for a while and they feel it's hard for them to transition to a different organisation because of the care plans or other understandings that they have with the current organisation they are with, and also there's a lack of carers or a shortage of carers within the workforce for children. In terms of transitioning, we hear sometimes that there aren't ACCOs in places around the State. We also hear sometimes that there aren't carers willing to move over, or they're hesitant to move over or they don't feel comfortable moving over. Sometimes there can be tensions in Aboriginal children being transferred to ACCOs that we hear from the ACCOs as well. What I would say is, whilst I don't have the numbers on hand for you right now and I will take it on notice, the complexity of the issue—and I'm not undermining it or trying to skirt around it—is something we want to solve because it's not happening as fast as we would like it to. We know that it is best for Aboriginal children to be with Aboriginal families or at least actually prefer them with kin. But we've got a lot to do, and there is certainly tension within this space that we're hearing both from NGOs and from ACCOs. There are places where it's working well too, by the way, where NGOs are working really well with ACCOs. I'm happy to take the numbers on notice for you, but it's a big story.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> You answered my second question—for reasons—so thank you very much for that.</p> | <p>As at 31 December 2023, there were 1,752 Aboriginal children in the care of non-ACCO NGOs who need to transfer to an ACCO.</p> <p>From 1 July 2022 to 29 February 2024, there have been a total of 34 transfers of children from NGOs to ACCOs.</p> |

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| 35              | 63                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Going back, with those caseworkers, what are we actually talking about in terms of the description of those incredibly valuable and important roles that we have now got as caseworkers? What does that look like?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We can take that on notice and provide a copy of the role description to the Committee. But it is many of the same attributes that you would ask of a child protection caseworker generally, but there are some exceptions to that—or some additions, if you like. But yes, happy to provide that on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Refer to <b>Attachment QTON 35 and QTON 35.1</b> for the caseworker role description and additional requirements for the Prenatal Caseworker role.</p>   |
| 36              | 63                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> The following recommendation with FIC is that DCJ should design and implement in partnership with Aboriginal community groups and reps a system of post-removal support for Aboriginal mothers and fathers who have had a newborn or an infant child removed from their care. It states: <i>The system should include the mandatory provision of information to parents about their ability to seek post-removal support from the Secretary ...</i>As I understand it, that's reported as on hold. Is there any particular reason why that's currently not being progressed?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> To my knowledge, at this juncture it is not being progressed. I would be very happy, Ms Higginson, to come back with a considered response rather than indicate intent when I'm not quite sure what the reasons are. I'm very happy to come back with the position.</p> <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Yes, I would be super grateful. Thank you.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Could I just add one thing that relates to that FIC recommendation? We have been working with Legal Aid NSW and the ALS and have implemented an early referral to legal advice for any parent, but particularly for Aboriginal parents, not just at the point of removal but at the point that we first become involved with the family. We've had considerable uptake in referrals to Legal Aid and the ALS in the last six months or so. Again, we can provide the details to the Committee on notice in terms of the numbers. But that's really</p> | <p>I am advised that:<br/>This statement relates to FIC Recommendation 47. Recommendation 47 has been met in part through the rollout of the Legal Assistance for Families: Partnership Agreement (LAPFA) program.</p> <p>This is a collaborative partnership between Legal Aid, the Aboriginal Legal Service and DCJ, and provides information and assistance to families about their legal rights.</p> <p>Other work is underway that will further progress this recommendation, including the establishment of an Aboriginal Restoration Taskforce and the Prenatal Policy Review.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                  | about making sure that parents have got an advocate—in this case, a legal advocate—so that they understand their rights, they can advocate for them and hopefully try and prevent removal as well. It's early days but promising.   |  |
| 37              | 64                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> On that, I would be very grateful, so that we can understand where we are— the considered response would be great—but, if it's possible, could you—I'm happy for you to take it on notice, unless you have—provide a breakdown of all babies removed from hospital or removed in their first two weeks of life from each of the years 2021-22, 2022-23 and from 1 July to current; then, for each district that that happens, to please provide the number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal babies removed?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We can do that.</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>The <b>Attachment QTON 37 and 38</b> provides the number of babies removed or entering care in their first two weeks of life, by time of removal, in 2021-22, 2022-23, and from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023.<br/>This data is not extractable by DCJ District for privacy reasons, as the data may become identifiable.</p> |
| 38              | 64                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Also with that is the breakdown. What I'm looking for is the percentage of the total Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal babies born by the time of removal, so at birth, within 24 hours of the child being born, with the percentage being removed from hospital—sorry, removed from hospital within one to three days after birth; within four to seven days after birth, with the percentage being removed from hospital; and then, again, eight to 14 days after birth with the percentage being removed from hospital. Thank you.<br/>What has been the expenditure on the pregnancy family conferencing—which was, as I understand, 2021-2023 across the State by DCJ—out of the \$38.6 million that was provided four years ago?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I can give this year's, which is \$21.5 million. I'm happy to get the other information that you requested.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>See response to question taken on notice number 37.</p>   |
| 39              | 64                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> Great. Thank you very much. You spoke about the work that DCJ's doing with Health in that prenatal space. What does that look like? Clearly, we've got the caseworkers, and they're providing that link between DCJ and Health and then the families or the mothers. What else does it look like in terms of that Health</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Questions regarding the details of Pregnancy Family Conferencing Health roles and positions are best directed to the Minister for Health.</p>   |

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|                 |                   |                  | <p>relationship?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Health have coordinator positions that manage the program. I don't think I've got the actual number of them around the State, but we can provide that on notice. But they have very much a coordinating role and are, obviously, integral to the process, because we want the health services, where appropriate, engaged. So that person's very much a coordinator but a navigator of those services, whereas our caseworker might not be always familiar with all of the health services that might be available.</p>  |  |
| 40              | 64                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> I don't know whether you have any available information on this, but have interventions been generally increasing, or decreasing, in the Northern Rivers area post the floods? Is that data that you've captured?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> When you say "interventions", what do you mean?</p> <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> With child protection.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> We can take that on notice.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Yes, we can take that on notice. We do capture it. We capture a number of data points: obviously, the number of risk of significant harm reports, the number of re-reports, the types of abuse being reported and, of course, a number of metrics regarding children in out-of-home care. But we can provide a breakdown of that.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>The Northern Rivers region is contained in DCJ's Northern NSW District. <b>Attachment QTON 40</b> is quarterly comparison data for the Northern NSW district and NSW overall, showing children in risk of significant harm reports and children seen from Q1 2021/22 through to Q4 2022/23, capturing the pre and post flood period.</p> <p>The floods impacted the region in February and March 2022, which equates to the Q3 January 2022 to March 2022 quarter. This quarter is highlighted in yellow in the attached table.</p>   |
| 41              | 65                | The Acting Chair | <p><b>The ACTING CHAIR:</b> That's why I haven't heard of them. My apologies. Are you aware of an incredible organisation in the Northern Rivers called Human Nature? It's an organisation that's working with young people, and particularly young people in real need. Is that something DCJ is aware of?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I haven't come across that in either the homelessness space or out-of-home care, but I can take that on notice. You never know, we do fund a lot of services.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'm not aware of the service either, but happy to follow that up</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Since 2015, Human Nature has provided mental health support for young people aged 14-20 who are experiencing significant mental health challenges and trauma, offering therapeutic programs that take place outdoors in nature. DCJ does not provide recurrent funding to the service which is funded through grants, philanthropy, and donations. The NSW government has made the following one-off grants to Human Nature:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. August 2022: DCJ NGO Flood Support Program Grant \$200,000 (all Northern Rivers LGA) to identify young people who are unable to engage in conventional mental</li> </ol> |

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|                 |                   |                                 |   | <p>health services and require support; to reduce barriers faced by young people to access support and provide tailored therapeutic supports outside of clinical office spaces.</p> <p>2. December 2023: NSW Reconstruction Authority Grant: \$50,500 to extend access to mental health, wellbeing and supports for Northern Rivers young people impacted by the 2022 floods.</p> |
| 42              | 66                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a breakdown of how many foster carers are emergency carers?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We do for DCJ. We'll just have to find it.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> There are 60 emergency foster carers statewide.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> As of what date is that?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Through to 4 January, so recruited between 1 July 2022 and 4 January 2024.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Thank you. I might move on to—</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> And 119 children and young people were placed with these carers.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Sorry, what was that?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> There were 119 children placed with those carers.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> So that's a total of 60. How many were recruited during that period?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> It was 60 recruited—just bear with me.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> And what is the total number as of 4 January?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> The total pool is 60 recruited between those two dates that I've said—1 July 2022 and 4 January 2024.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Okay, I get it. And of those people, how many have had to have their length of stay with the young person extended?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> I don't have that on me.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We'd have take that on notice.</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>There were 61 emergency foster carers/households with an authorisation date during the period 1 July 2022 and 4 January 2024.</p> <p>As at 12 March 2024, 21 of these carers/households had at least one child/young person in a placement longer than 12 weeks (84 days).</p>  |

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| 43              | 67                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> That's fine. In regards to the safeguarding panels, how many DCJ districts have safeguarding panels? Do you have dates of when they've met?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> All of the DCJ districts have got a safeguarding panel. Some have more than one. For example, our Western NSW district has three districts in total—or three sub-districts—Far West NSW, Western NSW and Murrumbidgee. You can't have one that covers the entire breadth. There's been in excess of 40 panels held to date. They were operational, all of them, by the end of November last year. We can certainly provide further detail on notice about the number of children that have come before that panel and the outcomes. They're really designed to slow down decision-making and make sure that we have ruled out every possible support option to prevent a child coming into care, and also exhausted any legal opportunities—trying to get caseworkers to use less intrusive options in a care application like a parental responsibility contract, a parent capacity order or a care plan by consent. That means it's less traumatic for everyone involved and, more importantly, families get the support they need to prevent escalation into care. But it's important to note that the panels do endorse any care applications and that is an additional safeguard for the Children's Court—but more myself and Michael—to make sure that we've exhausted everything we possibly can for a family.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>All districts now have an operational Safeguarding Decision Making for Aboriginal Children (SDMAC) Panel. Panels are scheduled on a fortnightly basis and additional panels can be convened in urgent situations.</p> <p>As at 7 March 2024, 93 Aboriginal children had been discussed at SDMAC panels, of these 36 Aboriginal children discussed at a SDMAC panels did not enter care and 57 Aboriginal children entered care, the majority of these children were placed in relative kinship care.</p> |
| 44              | 67                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a breakdown of the membership of the panel? As a percentage, how many are Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We do. Again, we can provide that on notice. I don't have it with me today. I think it's important to call out that we're still working on non-prescribed bodies being members of panels. We're working through a process at the moment of having confidentiality agreements with Elders and community members who may be interested in sitting on those panels as an additional safeguard around privacy and confidentiality. I expect that process is going to</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Safeguarding Decision Making about Aboriginal Children (SDMAC) panel membership is diverse and includes the following membership as per Terms of Reference (TOR):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Client Service- Chair</li> <li>• Director Community Services - Director Approval and Delegation</li> <li>• Independent Manager Client Service - holds an objective view</li> </ul>  |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>take a few months to complete. We currently have a number of ACCOs that sit on those panels, which is great, where they exist but there's more work to be done to incorporate community members onto those panels.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Casework and Caseworker - presents families to the panel providing case context and casework completed with families</li> <li>• Manager Permanency and Practice, Casework Specialist and Permanency Coordinator - Provides advice and support on practice and permanency</li> <li>• Aboriginal Members (Minimum of 4) - cultural practice experts providing cultural guidance, ensure a cultural lens has been applied to practice and supports/facilitates conversations around DCJ demonstration of active efforts</li> <li>• Multicultural Consultant- provides consultation for Aboriginal children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• ChildLaw Staff- provides advice and guidance on all legal options for consideration in practice</li> <li>• Administrative staff or Casework Support staff- provides admin support for documentation of meetings.</li> </ul> <p>Some district SDMAC Panels have attendance from external Aboriginal community leaders and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs).<br/>Other districts are consulting with community on the best way to engage with the panels going forward.</p> |
| 45              | 68                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Since we're touching on that, I might go back to a couple of questions. You mentioned some of the difficulties in relation to transitions. I'm interested to know what work's being done I suppose in part to support ACCOs, particularly in those areas where ACCOs don't exist, and what the department is doing in and around those areas.</p> <p><b>CLAIRE BEATTIE:</b> There are a few things that we've done to, one, support the transition to also work with NGOs who might not have transitioned yet, so I might step it out a little bit more broadly if that's okay because it's kind of a bigger picture than just this bit. The Minister noted this morning that she has written to NGOs to say, "You</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>DCJ is committed to developing an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) sector development strategy in conjunction with the sector.</p> <p>The sector development strategy will consider the intersections with other strategies including the Closing the Gap (CTG) prioritisation policy and sector maturity strategy work, which is being led by Aboriginal Affairs.</p>  |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>need to transition." That's the first thing. We also asked NGOs for plans of how they were going to transition, and in the last budget estimates Mr Thomas talked about those coming. Only nine out of 25 were received so far from the NGOs, so this has led to the Minister writing to the NGOs saying, "Where are your transition plans?" Some of the ones that were received weren't very clear on the how, so we do want to be clear on the how and the when as well within this. In terms of building ACCOs in areas that they're not, I guess it's true of any workforce shortage around the State. It's not an instant, "We want an ACCO in Broken Hill or an ACCO in Dubbo." We'd love all of those things, but starting an ACCO and building the—not the capability because that's the wrong term—ACCO itself in that space does take time. It doesn't happen overnight. I will take it on notice as to the way that we're doing an ACCO development plan and the ACCO transitions, and we can give more detail to that if you'd like. But I can say absolutely that we are committed to it. It's just the complexity of the workforce shortages in carers, the complexity around areas where there isn't one, and the complexity around some carers not wanting to transition to an ACCO. It's all happening at once, so it's just a matter of how we absolutely push the line with NGOs who don't have plans or who haven't indicated how they will, which is what the Minister has written to them about. We have to get there. We just have to get there. But I think it's going to take a bit of a process around building the sector at the same time as handing over, because if you've got no-one to hand over to, you can't—</p> |   |
| 46              | 68                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> In relation to foster carers, the Minister indicated at the last estimates that there was a campaign undertaken to recruit more foster carers. What was the cost of that campaign?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I think we'd need to take that one on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>In February 2023, DCJ commissioned an independent review of its foster care recruitment and authorisation process by the Department of Customer Service, at a cost of \$140,000.</p> |

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| 47              | 69                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a breakdown of the number of caseworkers who are responsible for young people where they do not live?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We can certainly provide that on notice. I don't have that with me today, but we can take it on notice.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>The Department holds information about the location of caseworkers and children and young people, however it is not stored in a system that enables extraction for reporting purposes. Given the arbitrary nature of postcodes and district boundaries, this information may not be responsive or meaningful.</p>                                |
| 48              | 69                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Thank you very much. In relation to the PSA's announcement this morning that we will see a year of strikes, I am just interested to know what provisions would be in place in the event that there are strikes?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> I have only heard of that action this morning. It's an important question. The answer to that question is important; I would need to take that on notice.</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>The Government is committed to working with our essential workers and their unions to ensure high-quality service provision across the State.</p>  |
| 49              | 70                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> My last question is, it wasn't clear this morning from the Minister's response in relation to Tomaree Lodge and the time frame for their review. I understand that it costs around \$1 million a year just in maintenance and security to operate?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I think that's correct. I will just double-check for you for. For Tomaree, yes, it's \$1 million per annum.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Is there a time frame as to when the decision will be made?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'll need to come back on notice on that one.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>DCJ spends approximately \$1 million annually on maintenance and security at Tomaree Lodge. A timeline for the delivery of the long-term master plan for the site is currently under discussion. Unfortunately, no meaningful work was undertaken by the former government, despite the long lead-time for the decommissioning of this site.</p> |
| 50              | 71                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I also want to clarify, my previous question in relation to the substantiation of abuse came from an answer that was asked by my colleague, Ms Higginson. The response that we received was that in 2022-23 there was 654 children who were the subjects of substantiation of abuse in out-of-home care, of which 109 had sexual abuse as the primary abuse type.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We can take that on notice and clarify. One other</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Refer to response to question taken on notice 33.</p>  |

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|                 |                   |                                 | question from this morning, if that's okay—sorry, I'm taking your time, Ms Higginson.  |  |
| 51              | 71                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> There was a question about cases being closed due to competing priorities. In 2022-23 approximately 60 per cent of children suspected at ROSH could be described as not seen. This can mean that they did not receive a face-to-face assessment from a DCJ caseworker or did not access early intervention or preservation services. It should be said that not all of those children require further action or response and, importantly, caseworkers can refer families to a specialist service as well.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a breakdown of where they're located by district?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We can take that on notice</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>See the <b>Attachment QTON 51</b> for ROSH reports closed due to competing priorities by district in 2022/23.</p> <p>This refers to reports which were reviewed and assessed at the Community Services Centre (CSC) but closed due to competing priorities prior to a face-to-face assessment by a DCJ caseworker.</p> <p>Importantly, all cases were reviewed and assessed by relevant caseworkers to determine whether a statutory response was necessary. Not all reports require a face-to-face assessment.</p> |
| 52              | 71                |                                 | <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I'm sorry, I have one more addition. There was also a question—and, forgive me, I can't recall who asked it; it might've been Ms Mihailuk. The number of ACA providers—there are 24 alternative care arrangement providers as of today. We will come back on the number of for-profit of that 24. We didn't have that at hand, but we'll come back on notice with that.</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>Of the 24 ACA providers, 17 are for profit providers.</p>   |
| 53              | 10                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I might also follow on from correspondence. It is nice to see that the Acting Chair has had some of her correspondence responded to. Minister, I wrote to you in August and September last year on behalf of two foster families—one regarding their experience as a carer, the other wanting to adopt—and I haven't received a response. I also wrote to you in November regarding a lady living in SDA whose brother was concerned for her safety. I also raised that matter with you at the last estimates. I still haven't received a response. But the matter I wanted to raise was in relation to a foster carer who also wrote to you—and I wrote to you in December last year. This couple have been carers for 28 years and have fostered 68 children. They have adopted two children with</p> | <p>I am advised<br/>A response has been provided to The Hon Natasha McLaren Jones.</p>   |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p>Down syndrome, adopted a child with non-accidental brain injury and have been long-term carers for another young person with Down syndrome. In fact, they've cared for him since the age of five and this young person is now 17. Do you recall that matter?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Ms Maclaren-Jones, I believe I have signed that letter just last week, in response to you. Yes, I recall the amazing work that that family has been doing.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> So you would recall that they are trying to adopt the young person, having already adopted siblings, and they have actually written to you, asking for your support in this process. Their concern is this young person is going to turn 18 and will not be able to consent to be adopted. As I said, the correspondence was sent by that family and then again from me in December last year. It's now three months on.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I will have to check. I believe that the family came to me directly as well ,and I understand—and I will check, but I think we have responded directly to them last year, and, unfortunately, there has been some delay in responding to you, in addition to that. That being the case, I am sorry for that delay. But I can assure you that when we get matters coming to us the department is doing the work to understand where the situation is at well before a response is received. So it does sometimes—because there are complexities, as in all cases. So that work obviously starts, and then we try to provide a meaningful response when we can, in the constraints of all the privacy issues.</p> |  |
| 54              | 15                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Minister, how many have gone into residential home care placements?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> That I would have to come back to you on.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>Between 1 November 2023 to 4 March 2024, 77 children and young people exited High-Cost Emergency Arrangements (HCEAs) to residential care placements.</p> |

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|                 |                   |                         |   | Of these children, 29 exited from an Alternative Care Arrangement (ACA), 15 from an Individual Placement Arrangement (IPA), 28 from a Short Term Emergency Placement (STEP), 2 from and Interim Care Model (ICM) and 3 from Special OOHC.   |
| 55              | 25                | The Hon. Tania Mihailuk | <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Minister, just back on alternative care arrangements, how many providers are there in New South Wales?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Ms Mihailuk, I might have to come back to you on that. But I can say that of those providers—I think the figure I saw was 89 per cent of them are for-profit providers.</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> For profit?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Correct.</p>   | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>Alternative Care Arrangements (ACAs) are used on an as needed basis and funded under a fee for service arrangement. The actual number of providers used at any given time will fluctuate based on demand and need. There were 24 providers delivering ACAs on 4 March 2023.</p>   |
| 56              | 27                | The Hon. Tania Mihailuk | <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Sorry to interrupt you, Minister. I think what you're saying is fine, but what I wanted to ask you is those contractual arrangements—and perhaps your department there can respond. Are they six months, 12 months, 24 months? Where are we up to? If we want to step in, you're working under existing contractual arrangements.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> For the alternative care arrangements?</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> They are on an ongoing basis. They are just one-offs.</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> For what time frame?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> They're not locked in at all.</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Maybe the department can give me an example. Is that a one-off payment for, "You look after this many kids",</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> It is done on effectively a bespoke arrangement in relation to each young person. So the need arises, there is a problem with placement and an agency or organisation is approached and arrangements are put in place specifically for that child or young person.</p> | <p>I am advised:</p> <p>On 5 March 2024 there were 24 providers caring for children in an ACA. These providers were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys To The Bush Ltd</li> <li>• Brighter Access Ltd</li> <li>• Capital Capability Support</li> <li>• CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning</li> <li>• Connecting Families Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Department of Communities and Justice</li> <li>• Fam Connect Pty Limited</li> <li>• Goodradigbee Cultural &amp; Heritage Aboriginal Corporation</li> <li>• Hunt Brothers</li> <li>• Intensive Support Pty Ltd</li> <li>• King &amp; Donovan Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Kutanya Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Mana Support Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Maple</li> <li>• Next Step Incorporated</li> <li>• Paramount Youth Services Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Pegasus Community Care Pty Ltd</li> </ul> |

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|                 |                   |                                 | <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> Then it's open ended, I'd imagine.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> There's no set time frame on those arrangements. I think it's just important to callout there is no contractual arrangement. It's an individual agreement between the department and/or the NGO, and that particular provider.</p> <p><b>The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK:</b> But then you must know who is providing this type of service, so you have to have a list of those providers so you know who to turn to.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> We're getting that for you. We'll be able to provide that.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality And Care Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Quest Employment Solutions Pty Ltd – (Business name Quest Care Solutions)</li> <li>• Sanctuary Family Connections Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Snap Programs Limited</li> <li>• The Trustee For Ngadhi Family Services</li> <li>• Workpac Health And Social Care Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Yinggirra Pty Ltd.</li> </ul>                    |
| 57              | 33                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Minister, how many DCJ-owned properties are there that are being used as disability accommodation?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I think we'll be able to get that figure to you. I won't be able to get it right now but we'll attempt to get it to you by the end of this session. There are currently 805 properties in the portfolio. The number of actual—</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> That's fine. So it hasn't changed since last estimates? It still remains 805?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Correct.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>As at 31 January 2024, there were 731 DCJ owned properties occupied for disability accommodation and services.</p> <p>The total number of DCJ owned properties in the portfolio is 804. This is a decrease of 1 property from the previous number of 805 properties, as a vacant group home in Wyong was returned to the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) in December 2023.</p> |
| 58              | 35                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Minister, I will interrupt. My question is: Are you confident there is no young person in your care missing out on palliative care at the moment?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I will defer to Ms Czech to see if there are any children that we're aware of that are in the system that are currently seeking palliative care.</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> If it will assist the Committee and Ms Maclaren-Jones, we can get the numbers of children in care who have an approved end-of-life plan, which may include palliative care services. We can provide that either before the end—</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> We can cover that this afternoon.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>As at 8 March 2024, there were 8 children with end-of-life plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 of the 8 children are currently in paediatric palliative care.</li> <li>• 6 of the 8 children have Do Not Resuscitate plans in place.</li> <li>• 2 of the 8 children are case managed by an NGO.</li> </ul>   |

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|                 |                   |                 | <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> Yes. It's always a very small number of children, but we can provide the numbers for the Committee.</p>   |   |
| 59              | 36                | Ms Abigail Boyd | <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> When will the New South Wales Government be giving its formal response to that NDIS review final report?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> That's an ongoing piece of work. We are obviously working really closely across all States and Territories and with the Commonwealth. The work before us right now is a design of the foundation of supports, and what that looks like across the country. That's the work that's before us right now.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> Is there a date for responding, though? Is there some sort of whole-of-government process for that?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> It's certainly a whole-of-government process; I can say that. I think this is an approach that's going to be a staged approach, in any event, because we have the design and, as I said, the foundational supports as a key element. Setting up a system of supports outside the NDIS to create that ecosystem where people can access the supports where they need them, when they need them—that's the work before us all at the moment. <b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> Can you maybe take it on notice as to whether there's a time line for reporting on specific bits of it?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> As I'm aware, there's not. But what's being proposed in the review isn't going to be implemented quickly. It's by design. It's a five-year process, in any event.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> Can I ask Ms Campbell, is there—<b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> Yes, I was just going to add in to your comments, Minister.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Please do.</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> In terms of the New South Wales NDIS plan, as you know, that expires at the end of, I think, June 2028. The agreement</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>This report by the Committee for Children and Young People was issued during the term of the previous Government. The duty to respond lapsed when the 57th Parliament of NSW was prorogued in advance of the 2023 State election.</p> <p>The NSW Government is currently considering the report.</p> |

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|                 |                   |        | <p>through National Cabinet was the indexation that's currently in those agreements. Not just New South Wales but other States and Territories would go from 4 per cent to 8 per cent, so obviously everything needs to be in place by then. That's the drop-dead date.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> There's not an actual response being required, but now that that's happening there's a series of steps that we need to put in place before that?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> Yes, correct. It's very much a staged approach to get to that point.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> Excellent. We had an inquiry through the Committee on Children and Young People in 2022 that was looking into, basically, children falling through the gaps of the family law system versus the child protection system. I don't think we've seen a response to that from the Government. We had a series of recommendations.</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I might let Mr Tidball answer that.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> You, Ms Boyd, asked that question the other day. I have gone searching for it. I suspect, to my knowledge, we have not responded. The intention would be to respond.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> Are you familiar with that report, Minister?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I recall the first meeting you had before the committee meeting, as well, with some of the stakeholders that were calling for that. Yes, I'm familiar with the report that came from it whilst I was in opposition at the time.</p> <p><b>Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:</b> I think the response has maybe fallen between the new Government. Can I ask you to look at that?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> We'll revisit that.</p> |        |

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|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 60              | 40                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have that breakdown on a monthly basis since it started to be captured in July?</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I will have to find out from the department whether that's possible.</p>  | <p>I am advised:<br/>This question refers to enrolment and attendance data for children and young people in OOHC.<br/>Refer to responses for questions taken on notice number 5 and 18.</p> |
| 61              | 40                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> The final thing is just in relation to the correspondence you referred to this morning. Just to clarify, I've checked with the office. The response that you've given to me was in relation to another piece of correspondence. The matter I was referring to was a foster carer who is trying to adopt a young person with Down syndrome. They wrote to you early December. I wrote to you on 14 December. We haven't received a response as yet. If you could follow that up—</p> <p><b>Ms KATE WASHINGTON:</b> I'll certainly follow that up.</p>   | <p>I am advised<br/>Refer to question taken on notice 53.</p>   |
| 62              | 49                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> We were talking about the Children's Court. I'm just wondering about the impact—or is there a delay in cases being seen in the Children's Court?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> There certainly were some longer times from lodging to final order during the COVID period—so the lockdown periods—and that resulted in many more cases than the court ordinarily would need to deal with. My understanding—and we can certainly double-check this—is that the numbers of matters for the Children's Court are back to pre-COVID numbers, and I understand there are around 1,400 in any given time. But, like I said, we can double-check that and maybe get the answer to that during the course of this afternoon.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>This question should be directed to the Attorney General.</p>  |

| Question Number | Transcript Page # | Member                          | Question on Notice   | Answer  |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 63              | 52                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes. In relation to grant payments to NGOs by DCJ and also Health, I understand it's been indexed by 5.75 per cent for 2023-24. Do you have a dollar value for that amount?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I do, but I don't think I've got it on me today. I can certainly provide that.</p>   | <p>I am advised:<br/>The 2023/24 indexation rate of 5.75 per cent amounts to approximately \$64,255,858.</p>  |
| 64              | 52                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Are you able to also provide a breakdown of how much was received within the following sectors: child and family services, neighbourhood centres, homeless services, community mental health, and domestic and family violence?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> Community mental health, I wouldn't have. That would be Health. And the homelessness would be under Minister Jackson. But the other ones—we may have a different categorisation, like targeted early intervention, where the neighbourhood centres would be within that, but, yes, we're happy to provide that.</p>                                | <p>I am advised:<br/>The 2023/24 budget for Targeted Earlier Intervention is \$187 million.</p> <p>The 2023/24 budget for Family Preservation, Family Connect and Support program, and Pregnancy Family Conferencing is \$182 million.</p> <p>Questions related to homelessness should be directed to the Minister for Housing and Homelessness.</p> <p>Questions related to domestic and family violence should be directed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.</p> <p>Questions related to community mental health should be directed to the Minister for Health.</p> |
| 65              | 60                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> I want a breakdown of the number of young people in each service type within the high-cost emergency arrangement?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> Yes, I do, if the extract from which I'll quote is 29 February. The total, as I believe has been explained in earlier evidence, is 434 and the breakdown—and I'm assuming these are the categories you're after—ACA is 76; IPA, 198; STEP, 51; Special Care, 16; ICM, 93.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Do you have a costing for each of those—how much it cost for the 76?</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> An average cost, do you mean?</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>Refer to response to question taken on notice 32.</p>  |

| Question Number | Transcript Page # | Member                          | Question on Notice   | Answer  |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
|                 |                   |                                 | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Yes, under each of those categories or service areas.</p> <p><b>MICHAEL TIDBALL:</b> I don't believe I do with me. Ms Merton, I think I'd need to take that on notice. I certainly don't have it with me in my folder.</p>  |   |
| 66              | 61                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> What is the age of the youngest child in an ACA as of that date?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> The youngest child is part of a sibling group and this is at 29 February. That child is two.</p> <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> How long has that young person been in the ACA?</p> <p><b>SIMONE CZECH:</b> I haven't got that specific detail, but we might be able to get that during the afternoon.</p>   | I am advised:<br>As of 11 March 2024, the child had been in an ACA for 173 nights.  |
| 67              | 69                | The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones | <p><b>The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:</b> Also, what was the outcome? How many have you recruited? I also wanted to know what is the current policy in relation to foster carers and NGOs? Is there a focus now to have foster carers more within DCJ?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I think that's one of the areas where we're currently looking at a whole range of options, given the out-of-home care financial issues, and looking at ensuring that we have the ability to place children in much more home-like foster care arrangements rather than into high-cost emergency arrangements. That is work that is being progressed at the moment within the department for the Minister.</p> | <p>I am advised that:<br/>In February 2023, DCJ commissioned an independent review of the foster care recruitment and authorisation process. The final report, delivered in May 2023, made eight key recommendations to improve and expedite the end-to-end carer authorisation process.</p> <p>Since May 2023, DCJ has progressed implementation of all the recommendations. While the projects are all developed and delivered, it will likely take time for the benefits of the enhancements to be realised.</p> <p>Between 1 July 2022 and 7 March 2024, DCJ has recruited 44 new authorised emergency foster carer (EFC) households state-wide, consisting of 74 individual authorised carers.</p> <p>As at 7 March 2024, DCJ has a total pool of 191 emergency foster carer households.</p> |

| Question Number | Transcript Page # | Member                 | Question on Notice   | Answer  |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| 68              | 59                | The Hon. Rachel Merton | <p><b>The Hon. RACHEL MERTON:</b> If I could turn to contracts at the moment, under the Casework Support Scheme, a number of out-of-home care organisations will have their contracts ending on 3 November this year. As you are probably aware, this includes Wesley Mission, Life Without Barriers, CASPA, Boys to the Bush and Anglicare. What will happen to these organisations after 3 November?</p> <p><b>ANNE CAMPBELL:</b> I'll take that one on notice to give you specific details. I can tell you that with the Targeted Earlier Intervention program, 15 per cent of the individual clients are Aboriginal.</p> | <p>I am advised:<br/>There are currently 88 Panel Deeds with Service Providers under the Casework Support Scheme (CSS).</p> <p>Some CSS approved providers are OOHC organisations. This includes Wesley, Anglicare Sydney, Boys to the Bush and CASPA. Life Without Barriers is not a CSS Provider.</p> <p>20 CSS providers are Aboriginal providers.</p> <p>All current CSS provider Panel Deeds expire on 3 November 2024. DCJ is currently considering options for recommissioning of new contracts and providers will be advised of the process and timeframes.</p> |

| Department of Communities and Justice Caseworker & Caseworker Specialists by Tenure and by NSW District, as at December 2023 |                  |                    |                    |                     |                      |                    |
|--|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Districts  | Less than 1 year | 1 - < than 2 years | 2 - < than 5 years | 5 - < than 10 years | 10 - < than 20 years | More than 20 years |
| Community Services Statewide Services  | 8%               | 5%                 | 17%                | 32%                 | 27%                  | 10%                |
| H&CC Districts   | 21%              | 11%                | 20%                | 21%                 | 21%                  | 6%                 |
| ILS and SNSW Districts   | 18%              | 18%                | 27%                | 19%                 | 13%                  | 5%                 |
| MBD FW and WNSW Districts  | 18%              | 11%                | 22%                | 21%                 | 25%                  | 4%                 |
| MNC NNSW and NE Districts  | 17%              | 8%                 | 26%                | 25%                 | 19%                  | 5%                 |
| Office of the Senior Practitioner  | 0%               | 0%                 | 9%                 | 40%                 | 35%                  | 16%                |
| SES SYD and NSYD Districts   | 20%              | 20%                | 24%                | 17%                 | 16%                  | 4%                 |
| South Western Sydney District  | 26%              | 11%                | 19%                | 21%                 | 16%                  | 8%                 |
| WSYD and NBM Districts   | 21%              | 13%                | 22%                | 22%                 | 16%                  | 6%                 |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | <b>17%</b>       | <b>11%</b>         | <b>21%</b>         | <b>24%</b>          | <b>21%</b>           | <b>7%</b>          |

Source: Process and Technology Harmonisation (PaTH), NSW Government, extracted March 2024

| Average cost per child<br>\$'000 | \$'000                | \$'000                 | \$'000                  |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
|                                  | Jan-Jun 23<br>Average | Aug23-Jan24<br>Average | Nov23- Jan24<br>Average |
| ACA                              | 1020.57               | 881.00                 | 842.65                  |
| IPA                              | 822.61                | 893.00                 | 824.09                  |
| STEP                             | 927.60                | 873.85                 | 863.92                  |
| Special Care                     | 1026.40               | 805.52                 | 763.75                  |

# ROLE DESCRIPTION

## Caseworker / Helpline Caseworker

|                                  |   |                     |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| <b>Cluster</b>                   | Stronger Communities  |                     |
| <b>Department</b>                | Department of Communities and Justice   |                     |
| <b>Division/Branch/Unit</b>      | Child Protection & Permanency, District and Youth Justice Services (Northern) / South Western Sydney District |                     |
| <b>Location</b>                  | Various   |                     |
| <b>Classification/Grade/Band</b> | Clerk Grade 3-7<br>(entry level for Helpline Caseworkers from grade 4)  |                     |
| <b>Role Number</b>               | Generic   |                     |
| <b>ANZSCO Code</b>               | 272613  |                     |
| <b>PCAT Code</b>                 | 1119192   |                     |
| <b>Date of Approval</b>          | 18 September 2023   | <b>Ref: SWSD022</b> |
| <b>Agency Website</b>            | www.dcj.nsw.gov.au  |                     |

**Please see job notes and/or advertisement for more information on specific role qualification requirements and relevant experience.**

### Agency overview

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is the lead agency under the Stronger Communities Cluster. DCJ works to enable everyone's right to access justice and help for families through early intervention and inclusion, with benefits for the whole community. Stronger Communities is focussed on achieving safe, just, inclusive and resilient communities by providing services that are effective and responsive to community needs.

### Primary purpose of the role

Work directly with children, young people and families to support them to achieve change that keeps children and young people safe and improves their social, emotional, health and educational outcomes.

### Key accountabilities

- Deliver accountable and collaborative casework that respects the culture and context of each child, young person, family and community and is based on timely sharing of accurate information to ensure that the support meets their identified needs
- Undertake assessment / investigation and ongoing family work to identify and address safety and risk concerns for children and young people
- Model ethical and curious casework that is responsive to the changing needs of children, young people and families
- Build relationships within practice and legislative frameworks to create change in families and keep children and young people safe
- Develop and maintain networks and relationships with key stakeholders to deliver appropriate services for children, young people and families

- Participate and contribute to a culture of continuous learning and professional development to ensure practice knowledge and skills are contemporary and evidence-based
- Maintain accurate and relevant client records for reporting and information sharing
- Share decision making with family and key stakeholders about children and young people to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the risks, safety and wellbeing

**Key Accountabilities for Helpline Caseworker roles only**

- Answer telephone calls and emails within a contact centre environment and undertake the intake and assessment of concerns for the safety and risk of significant harm for children and young people
- Seek avenues, where required, to provide support to a child, young person or family
- Produce clear, concise and accurate professional intake reports and other written materials to support Departmental staff including Community Service Centre staff on undertaking case management and coordinating support services
- Undertake case management responsibilities in out-of-hours circumstances where risk containment is required and/or a field response is necessary

**In order to progress to Grade 7, a caseworker must be willing to undertake this additional accountability:**

- Provide, coaching, advice and support to less experienced caseworkers and participate in training and orientation activities

**Note: Refer to the approval process for incremental progression from Clerk maximum grade 6 to minimum grade 7.**

**Key challenges**

- Assessing the safety and risk of children and young people in complex and challenging situations where the majority of families and/or children are at significant disadvantage due to factors such as a prior history of trauma, poverty and violence
- Being sensitive to cultural differences, social complexities and the uniqueness of every family and child while ensuring that children and young people are safe and cared for
- Maintaining a focus on children and young people in situations where clients are involuntary, or carers/parents/guardians disagree with DCJ actions

**Key relationships**

| Who                     | Why   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Internal</b>         |   |
| Casework Manager        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct supervisor</li> <li>• Seek direction, advice and support</li> <li>• Provide information and feedback</li> </ul>                               |
| Manager Client Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice leader of the CSC office/JCPRP Cluster</li> <li>• Seek direction, advice and support</li> <li>• Provide information and feedback</li> </ul> |

| Who  | Why  |
|--|--|
| Caseworkers/Team Members   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peers and colleagues</li> <li>• Provide information and advice</li> <li>• Provide an effective and valuable two-way liaison</li> </ul>  |
| Casework Specialists, psychologists, clinical issues consultants, legal officers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist and clinical advice</li> </ul>   |
| Other DCJ Divisions  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise to ensure the provision of timely and accurate advice when requested</li> <li>• Develop and maintain effective working relationships</li> <li>• Negotiate/agree on timeframes</li> </ul> |
| <b>External</b>  |  |
| Children, young people and families  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main focus for caseworkers who are working to promote good parenting and providing a safe and stable home</li> </ul>  |
| Carers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key clients who provide care for children and young people</li> </ul>   |
| Government and non-government partners   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate to provide appropriate services for children young people and families</li> </ul>   |
| Children's court   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Court orders, and other legal decisions on children and families are brought before the Children's Court</li> </ul>   |

## Key relationships for Helpline Caseworker roles

| Who   | Why   |
|---|---|
| <b>Internal</b>   |   |
| Team Manager<br>(Caseworker Helpline in the After Hours Response Team may report to a Manager Casework) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct supervisor</li> <li>• Seek direction, advice and support</li> <li>• Provide information and feedback</li> </ul>                                 |
| Manager Client Services   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice leader of the CSC office/JCPRP Cluster</li> <li>• Seek direction, advice and support</li> <li>• Provide information and feedback</li> </ul>   |
| <b>External</b>   |   |
| Children, young people and families and Mandatory Reporters   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with to ascertain all relevant information relating to intake and assessment of the situation.</li> <li>• Provide advice and support</li> </ul> |
| General Public  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advice and information relating to DCJ's services</li> </ul>   |

## **Role dimensions**

### **Decision making**

The primary focus of decision making for a caseworker is in assessing / investigating and supporting children, young people and their families. Planning next steps for families to connect with appropriate support services are part of day-to-day decision making.

The role

- works with supervision to set priorities and approach to workload and outputs as allocated by management, with time and experience carries a level of autonomy in setting priorities and managing workload in alignment with management
- responsible for determining own actions undertaken, within government and legislative policies, and for ensuring quality control in the implementation of own workload
- ensures a course of action is suitable and based on sound evidence, as required to management or senior staff in the absence of complete information or where expert advice is required
- as necessary, consults with manager or senior staff on a suitable course of action in matters that are sensitive, high-risk or business-critical, or for those issues that have far reaching implications with respect to resources or quality advice provision

Refer to the Department Delegations for specific financial and/ or administrative delegations for this role.

### **Reporting line**

The role reports to the Casework Manager or Team Manager.

### **Direct reports**

Nil

### **Budget/Expenditure**

Nil

## **Essential requirements**

- Tertiary qualifications in a Social Work, Psychology, Social Science Welfare or related discipline with demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development
- Current driver's licence

## **Additional requirement for Helpline Caseworker role only**

To commence as a Helpline Caseworker (Clerk grade 4) you must have a minimum of 2 years work experience as a Caseworker in a relevant field

Appointments are subject to reference checks. Some roles may also require the following checks/ clearances:

- National Criminal History Record Check in accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014

- Working with Children Check clearance in accordance with the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012

## Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

### Focus capabilities

*Focus capabilities* are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

| FOCUS CAPABILITIES   |   |  |              |
|--|---|--|--------------|
| Capability group/sets  | Capability name   | Behavioural indicators   | Level        |
| <br>Personal Attributes | <b>Display Resilience and Courage</b><br>Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be flexible and adaptable and respond quickly when situations change</li> <li>• Offer own opinion and raise challenging issues</li> <li>• Listen when ideas are challenged and respond appropriately</li> <li>• Work through challenges</li> <li>• Remain calm and focused on challenging situations</li> </ul>   | Intermediate |
| <br>Relationships       | <b>Commit to Customer Service</b><br>Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on providing a positive customer experience</li> <li>• Support a customer-focused culture in the organisation</li> <li>• Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the services provided and relay this knowledge to customers</li> <li>• Identify and respond quickly to customer needs</li> <li>• Consider customer service requirements and develop solutions to meet needs</li> <li>• Resolve complex customer issues and needs</li> <li>• Cooperate across work areas to improve outcomes for customers</li> </ul> | Intermediate |

## FOCUS CAPABILITIES

| Capability group/sets  | Capability name   | Behavioural indicators   | Level        |
|--|---|--|--------------|
|  <p>Relationships</p>       | <p><b>Work Collaboratively</b><br/>Collaborate with others and value their contribution</p>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work as a supportive and cooperative team member, sharing information and acknowledging others' efforts</li> <li>• Respond to others who need clarification or guidance on the job</li> <li>• Step in to help others when workloads are high</li> <li>• Keep the team and supervisor informed of work tasks</li> <li>• Use appropriate approaches, including digital technologies, to share information and collaborate with others</li> </ul>  | Foundational |
|  <p>Results</p>            | <p><b>Think and Solve Problems</b><br/>Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the facts and type of data needed to understand a problem or explore an opportunity</li> <li>• Research and analyse information to make recommendations based on relevant evidence</li> <li>• Identify issues that may hinder the completion of tasks and find appropriate solutions</li> <li>• Be willing to seek input from others and share own ideas to achieve best outcomes</li> <li>• Generate ideas and identify ways to improve systems and processes to meet user needs</li> </ul> | Intermediate |
|  <p>Business Enablers</p> | <p><b>Technology</b><br/>Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness</p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display familiarity and confidence when applying technology used in role</li> <li>• Comply with records, communication and document control policies</li> <li>• Comply with policies on the acceptable use of technology, including cyber security</li> </ul>   | Foundational |

## Complementary capabilities

*Complementary capabilities* are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as ‘not essential’ for this role is not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

| COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES   |                                     |  |              |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Capability Group/Sets  | Capability Name                     | Description  | Level        |
| <br>Personal Attributes | Act with Integrity                  | Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values                           | Intermediate |
|  | Manage Self                         | Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning                     | Intermediate |
|  | Value Diversity and Inclusion       | Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives | Intermediate |
| <br>Relationships     | Communicate Effectively             | Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect             | Intermediate |
|  | Influence and Negotiate             | Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts                            | Intermediate |
| <br>Results           | Deliver Results                     | Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes            | Foundational |
|  | Plan and Prioritise                 | Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances                       | Foundational |
|  | Demonstrate Accountability          | Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines         | Intermediate |
| <br>Business Enablers | Finance                             | Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk        | Foundational |
|  | Procurement and Contract Management | Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance     | Foundational |
|  | Project Management                  | Understand and apply effective project planning, coordination and control methods                      | Foundational |

## **Supplementary information for Prenatal Casework role**

The below is in addition to the generalist caseworker role description.

Additional requirements:

- Successful completion of CDP

Additional key accountabilities:

- Undertake assessment/investigation and ongoing family work to identify and address safety and risk concerns for unborn children (children and young people) within the family
- Advocate for and support families to engage with services and participate in meetings such as Pregnancy Family Conferences or hospital complex case meetings
- Develop and maintain networks and relationships with key stakeholders, in particular Health staff such as Pregnancy Family Conference facilitators, birthing hospital staff and hospital social workers
- Work in collaboration with NSW Health in the promotion and implementation of the Pregnancy Family Conferencing model

Alternate key challenges:

- Assessing the likely safety and risk of unborn babies after their birth while navigating complex vulnerabilities and service systems
- Maintaining a focus on the unborn child in situations where clients are voluntary, during pregnancy, and may disagree with DCJ actions or be reluctant to engage

Role dimensions:

- The primary focus of decision making for a caseworker is in assessing/investigating and supporting expectant parents during pregnancy. Planning next steps for families in connecting them with appropriate support services and developing supportive networks prior to the birth of their baby.

**QTON37 and 38 - Number of babies removed or entering OOHC in their first two weeks of life, by time of removal, in 2021-22, 2022-23, and from 1 July 2023 to 31 Dec 2023**

| Time of removal              | Number of babies |                |            |            |                |            |                            |                |           |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------|
|                              | 2021-22          |                |            | 2022-23    |                |            | July 2023 to December 2023 |                |           |
|                              | Aboriginal       | non-Aboriginal | Total      | Aboriginal | non-Aboriginal | Total      | Aboriginal                 | non-Aboriginal | Total     |
| At birth                     | 24               | 24             | 48         | 18         | 20             | 38         | 9                          | 9              | 18        |
| Within 1-3 days after birth  | 57               | 47             | 104        | 39         | 50             | 89         | 13                         | 18             | 31        |
| Within 4-7 days after birth  | 13               | 24             | 37         | 18         | 20             | 38         | 6                          | 10             | 16        |
| Within 8-14 days after birth | 9                | 23             | 32         | 12         | 13             | 25         | 6                          | 7              | 13        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>103</b>       | <b>118</b>     | <b>221</b> | <b>87</b>  | <b>103</b>     | <b>190</b> | <b>34</b>                  | <b>44</b>      | <b>78</b> |

**Notes:**

1. This table includes babies who:

a. either entered out-of-home care, or had the following legal orders started within the financial year: Assumption of Care Responsibility S44, Removal S43(1); and

b. the length of time between their date of birth and the order start date/out-of-home care entry date is less than or equal to 14 days

2. Time of removal is calculated by the calendar days between babies' date of birth and order start date or out-of-home care entry date, whichever is earlier. For example, if a child was born on 3 July 2022, had a removal order on 3 July 2022, and entered out-of-home care on 10 July 2022, the child is counted as removed at birth.

3. Non-Aboriginal includes 1 and 3 babies whose Aboriginal status is not stated in 2022-23, and July to December 2023 respectively.

4. In 2021-22, there were 12 babies (5 Aboriginal) who had a removal record within their two weeks of life but did not subsequently entered out-of-home care. There were also 16 (4 Aboriginal) babies entered out-of-home care within their two weeks of life with no removal record. Those 15 babies either had a temporary care arrangement, or had another parental responsibility order.

5. In 2022-23, there were 2 (all Aboriginal) babies who had a removal record within their two weeks of life but did not subsequently entered out-of-home care. There were also 13 (9 Aboriginal) babies entered out-of-home care within their two weeks of life with no removal record. Those 13 babies either had a temporary care arrangement, or had another parental responsibility order.

6. From July to December 2023, there were 2 babies (all Aboriginal) who had a removal record within their two weeks of life but did not subsequently entered out-of-home care. There were also 11 babies (2 Aboriginal) entered out-of-home care within their two weeks of life with no removal record. Those 11 babies either had a temporary care arrangement, or had another parental responsibility order.

7. There was one child who entered out-of-home care in July 2022 but the removal order started on 30 June 2022, this child was counted in the 2021-22 count and not counted in 2022-23.

Source: ChildStory

Table Q40: Children and young people (CYP) in ROSH and children seen during quarters, Q1 (Jul-Sep) 2021-22 to Q4 (Apr-Jun) 2022-23

| Aboriginality             | Q1 2021-22    |              |               | Q2 2021-22    |              |               | Q3 2021-22    |              |               | Q4 2021-22    |              |               | Q1 2022-23    |              |               | Q2 2022-23    |              |               | Q3 2022-23    |              |               | Q4 2022-23    |              |               |  |  |  |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--|--|--|
|                           | CYP<br>ROSH   | CYP<br>Seen  | % CYP<br>seen |  |  |  |
| <b>Northern NSW</b>       |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal                | 511           | 224          | 43.8%         | 526           | 192          | 36.5%         | 427           | 138          | 32.3%         | 526           | 171          | 32.5%         | 523           | 174          | 33.3%         | 469           | 105          | 22.4%         | 605           | 114          | 18.8%         | 621           | 101          | 16.3%         |  |  |  |
| Non-Aboriginal            | 771           | 224          | 29.1%         | 984           | 198          | 20.1%         | 747           | 168          | 22.5%         | 943           | 203          | 21.5%         | 907           | 186          | 20.5%         | 1,054         | 138          | 13.1%         | 1,077         | 127          | 11.8%         | 1,037         | 89           | 8.6%          |  |  |  |
| <b>Northern NSW Total</b> | <b>1282</b>   | <b>448</b>   | <b>34.9%</b>  | <b>1510</b>   | <b>390</b>   | <b>25.8%</b>  | <b>1174</b>   | <b>306</b>   | <b>26.1%</b>  | <b>1469</b>   | <b>374</b>   | <b>25.5%</b>  | <b>1430</b>   | <b>360</b>   | <b>25.2%</b>  | <b>1523</b>   | <b>243</b>   | <b>16.0%</b>  | <b>1682</b>   | <b>241</b>   | <b>14.3%</b>  | <b>1658</b>   | <b>190</b>   | <b>11.5%</b>  |  |  |  |
|                           | 29%           |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |  |  |  |
| <b>NSW</b>                |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |  |  |  |
| Aboriginal                | 9,221         | 3,186        | 34.6%         | 10,269        | 3,390        | 33.0%         | 9,516         | 3,113        | 32.7%         | 9,684         | 3,025        | 31.2%         | 9,702         | 2,810        | 29.0%         | 9,958         | 2,665        | 26.8%         | 9,991         | 2,649        | 26.5%         | 10,067        | 2,521        | 25.0%         |  |  |  |
| Non-Aboriginal            | 25,090        | 6,089        | 24.3%         | 29,827        | 6,525        | 21.9%         | 28,147        | 6,279        | 22.3%         | 28,663        | 6,169        | 21.5%         | 29,233        | 5,704        | 19.5%         | 29,586        | 5,520        | 18.7%         | 29,111        | 5,788        | 19.9%         | 28,593        | 4,942        | 17.3%         |  |  |  |
| <b>NSW Total</b>          | <b>34,311</b> | <b>9,275</b> | <b>27.0%</b>  | <b>40,096</b> | <b>9,915</b> | <b>24.7%</b>  | <b>37,663</b> | <b>9,392</b> | <b>24.9%</b>  | <b>38,347</b> | <b>9,194</b> | <b>24.0%</b>  | <b>38,935</b> | <b>8,514</b> | <b>21.9%</b>  | <b>39,544</b> | <b>8,185</b> | <b>20.7%</b>  | <b>39,102</b> | <b>8,437</b> | <b>21.6%</b>  | <b>38,660</b> | <b>7,463</b> | <b>19.3%</b>  |  |  |  |

**Notes:**

1. The data for non-Aboriginal CYP also includes CYP with Aboriginality status 'Not Stated' or blank.
2. Prior to 2022-23, district in the children and young people involved in ROSH report measure refer to the district of the first ROSH during the quarter. From Q1 2022-23, district is updated to the sub-cohort of children seen to align with the Children Seen measure.

Source: ChildStory - CIW annual data

### ROSH reports closed due to competing priorities by district, 2022-23

| District              | Number of Reports |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Central Coast         | 7509              |
| Far West              | 1328              |
| Hunter                | 18957             |
| Illawarra Shoalhaven  | 5763              |
| Mid North Coast       | 9355              |
| Murrumbidgee          | 11350             |
| Nepean Blue Mountains | 11396             |
| New England           | 10620             |
| Northern NSW          | 5507              |
| Northern Sydney       | 5848              |
| South Eastern Sydney  | 6068              |
| South Western Sydney  | 14770             |
| Southern NSW          | 4254              |
| Sydney                | 5398              |
| Western NSW           | 9169              |
| Western Sydney        | 9820              |
| Statewide Services    | 17                |
| <b>Grand Total</b>    | <b>137129</b>     |

Source: ChildStory

**Note:** Competing priorities refers to reports which were reviewed and assessed at the Community Services Centre (CSC) but closed due to competing priorities prior to a face-to-face assessment by a DCJ caseworker.

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