

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Finocchiaro to the Minister for Territory Families:

Youth Diversion

1. How many total youths have attended diversion in the past 12 months?
 - a. How many youths who attended diversion were charged with an offence during the course of the diversion program or at any point afterwards?
 - b. How many youths were referred to diversion more than once?
 - c. How many were referred by court? How many of these completed the diversion program successfully?
 - d. How many were referred by police? How many of these completed the diversion program successfully?
 - e. How many youths have attended diversion who were considered 'at-risk', but had not entered the youth justice system? How many of these completed the diversion program successfully? How many were charged with an offence during the course of the diversion program or at any point afterwards?
 - f. How many total hours of community service have been done by youth as part of diversion programs in the past 12 months?

The data required to answer these questions is collected by Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES) for police diversion, and by the Department of Attorney-General and Justice (DAG&J) for court diversion.

To improve this situation for the future, the Government has committed \$64 million to the Territory Families Client Management Systems Alignment project, which will provide significant improvements in Territory Families' ability to have real-time access to relevant and accurate data from Territory Families and related agencies.

Written Question 700 (WQ700), directed to NTPFES, contains similar questions to Written Question 699 (WQ699). NTPFES have advised that where applicable questions can be answered by referring to the response provided by NTPFES via WQ700.

1(a), (b), & (d)

WQ700 refers.

1(c)

This information is held by DAG&J. Territory Families can advise that 18 court ordered referrals were made to Youth Justice Conferences which, post-completion, can result in a referral to police for a youth diversion program. The completion of the youth diversion program cannot yet be determined as some of the cohort are still actively participating in the program.

1(e)

This information is held by DAG&J and NTPFES. For answers to police referred diversion WQ700 refers.

1(f)

A response is unable to be provided, as this information is not recorded by the Youth Diversion Program service providers in an extractable format.

2. How many youth justice group conferences have been run, in total in the past 12 months?

299

a. Who were the providers?

Provider
Groote Eylandt & Milyakburra Youth Development Unit
Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation
Anglicare NT
Catholic Care NT
East Arnhem Regional Council
MALA'LA
Tiwi Islands Regional Council
MacDonnell Regional Council
YWCA
Youth Outreach Re-Engagement Team (YORET) - Katherine
Jesuit Social Services
Relationships Australia NT

b. How many referrals came from police?

281

c. How many referrals came from courts?

18

- d. How many were charged with an offence at any point following referral to a conference?**

Territory Families do not hold this information. This information is held by DAG&J. For police referred conferences WQ700 refer

- e. How many were referred for diversion one or more times following a conference?**

For police diversion data WQ700 refers.

Of the 18 clients referred to conferences by the courts in question 2(c), one individual has had a subsequent referral.

- 3. How many victim conferences have been run, in total with youth offenders in the past 12 months?**

59

- a. Who were the providers?**

As outlined in question 2(a) above.

- b. How many referrals came from police?**

41

- c. How many referrals came from courts?**

18

- d. How many were charged with an offence at any point following referral to a conference?**

- e. How many were referred for diversion one or more times following a victim conference?**

Court data is collected by DAG&J. For police referred youth justice conferences, WQ700 4c) refers.

- 4. In terms of youth who are considered 'at-risk', but have not entered the youth justice system formally:**

- a. What are the criteria for being considered 'at-risk', and who makes that determination?**

Team Leaders in Territory Families' Youth Outreach and Engagement Teams (YORETs) make assessments based on their professional understanding of a young person's criminogenic risk factors, using a number of tools including specialist assessment tools.

b. Who is able to refer ‘at-risk’ youths to diversion programs?

Government agencies, non-government organisations and members of the public are able to refer young people who have not yet been in contact with the criminal justice system.

Police can refer at the point where a young person has been apprehended for an offence.

c. What are the acceptance criteria for an ‘at-risk’ youth to enter a diversion program?

Question 4a) refers.

All youth who are referred to youth diversion programs by police are assessed uniformly by police under criteria articulated in section 39 of the *Youth Justice Act 2005* (the Act).

d. If an ‘at-risk’ youth is referred to a diversion program, are they compelled to attend? How is attendance ensured, and who enforces it?

The Act specifies that if a young person fails to attend a diversion program under section 21 of the Act, proceedings may commence against the young person for the offence committed.

For those at-risk, who have not been formally referred by police or courts, attendance is voluntary. However, Case Managers provide strong support to maximise compliance.

5. How many total youths have attended the Operation Flinders Program in the past 12 months and how many programs were run

During 2018-19 three programs were delivered and 25 young people attended.

a. How many were referred by court?

There were no referrals from a Court.

b. How many were referred by police?

There were no direct referrals from police. However, young people are referred to the YORETs by a variety of sources, including other agencies, NGOs, police and the courts. YORET’s determine appropriateness of the young person to be included on a camp in discussion with other agencies involved with the young person.

c. How many youths completed the program successfully?

All participants completed the program successfully.

- d. How many were charged with an offence at any point following referral to the program?**

After completing the Operation Flinders program, five young people have been charged with committing an offence.

- e. How many were referred for diversion one or more times following completion of the program?**

Three young people were referred to Youth Diversion following completion of the program.

- f. How many youths have attended the program who were considered 'at-risk', but had not entered the youth justice system?**

All young people who attended these camps were considered as being at risk of offending.

- g. How many of these completed the program successfully?**

All participants who attended these camps completed the program successfully.

- h. How many were charged with an offence at any point following referral to the program?**

After completing the Operation Flinders program, five young people have been charged with committing an offence.

6. What was the total expenditure to operate diversion programs in the Northern Territory in the past 12 months, and what is the total funding included in this budget?

The budget for youth diversion is over \$20 million and includes YOREOs, *Back on Track*, bail accommodation and support, victim offender conferencing and victim support services, camps and other community youth diversion programs.

NGO Community Youth Diversion programs

For the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, the total expenditure by Territory Families to fund NGOs operating community YDP programs in the NT was \$2.8 million.

The total funding to operate community YDPs in the NT for this financial year is \$3.15 million.

The following questions refer to the identified providers of diversion programs in the Northern Territory as listed in 6a).

- a. For each of the following providers:
 - i. Anglicare;
 - ii. Catholic Care;
 - iii. East Arnhem Shire Council;
 - iv. Groote Eylandt & Milyakburra Youth Diversion Unit;
 - v. MacDonnell Regional Council;
 - vi. Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation;
 - vii. Relationships Australia;
 - viii. Tiwi Island Regional Council;
 - ix. Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation;
 - x. YWCA;
 - xi. Operation Flinders; and
 - xii. Jesuit Social Services.

Attachment A provides a breakdown of the identified providers of pre court diversion programs as listed in 6a).

- b. For each of the organisations listed:
 - i. Who is responsible for determining 'successful completion' of the program?

Police are responsible for determining the successful completion of all young people referred by police to pre court youth diversion programs, under section 39 of the *Youth Justice Act 2005* (the Act).

The Courts are responsible for deeming participants from the Jesuit Social Services, a court referred youth diversion program, as successful.

- ii. Please provide details of the funding received to operate youth diversion programs in the past year, and the funding they will receive under this budget.

Attachment A refers.

- iii. Please provide details of the program provided, including the type and duration of the program.

Attachment A refers.

- iv. How many youths were referred to the program in the past year by courts or police? How many of these completed the program successfully? How many of these were charged with an offence at any point after being referred to the program?

Territory Families do not hold this information.

Court related information is held by DAG&J. For police related data WQ700 refers.

- v. **How many youths were referred to the program who were considered 'at-risk', but had not entered the youth justice system? How many of these completed the program successfully? How many of these were charged with an offence at any point after being referred to the program?**

For police related data WQ700 refers.

- 7. What boot camps are currently in operation in the Northern Territory? What are the characteristics of those programs, if any, that would lead them to be considered boot camps?**

Current programs delivering camp based interventions funded by Territory Families are:

- Operation Flinders
- Mt Theo, NT – jointly funded with NT and Australian Government
- Malala Aboriginal Health Corporation, Maningrida NT
- Men's Tjilirra Movement (MTM), Central Australia – in conjunction with Creating A Safe and Supportive Environment (CASSE)
- MacDonnell Regional Council.

**Note funding for additional camps in other regions in the NT – including early intervention and longer term intensive camps and work camps, are currently being negotiated and are in different stages of development.*

These camps are delivered in bush settings and include the following key features:

- they are targeted to young people at risk of engagement and/or currently engaged in the criminal justice system
- develop self-awareness and positive self-identity
- provide opportunities to build life skills and resilience
- promote positive and pro-social behaviours
- provide therapeutic and targeted interventions aimed at changing the young person's anti-social and offending behaviour
- provide mentoring and role modelling
- provide opportunities for goal setting and team work
- pre-camp preparation and post-camp case management
- physical and psychological challenges (requiring the young person to challenge and 'stretch' themselves; and to take responsibility for their behaviour)
- cultural engagement/re-engagement, (including learning cultural respect).

8. What other types of youth camps are currently in operation in the Territory? If any, what parties are operating those youth camps (e.g. Northern Territory Government, NGOs, private enterprises, universities, Commonwealth Government) and who funds those youth camps?

Question 7 above refers to Territory Families related programs, including future proposed camp programs.

Territory Families does not administer a database on other externally funded youth camps in the NT.