A. Entity responses

As mandated in Section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, the Queensland Audit Office gave a copy of this report with a request for comments to the Queensland Police Service.

This appendix contains its detailed response to our audit recommendations.

The head of the entity is responsible for the accuracy, fairness, and balance of its comments.

Comments received from Commissioner, Queensland Police Service

QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
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Our Ref:

Your Ref:

21 November 2023

Mr Brendan Worrall
Auditor-General of Queensland
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Mr Worrall

The Queensland Police Service is steadfast in its commitment and dedication to our vision of making Queensland the safest state. As an organisation that embraces continuous improvement in achieving that vision, we are grateful for the insights contained in the Queensland Audit Office's Report "Deploying Police Resources". The Report's findings reinforce our current planning and direction.

Your report is correct in its observation that the QPS is a system under pressure. Given the current increased, competing and unrelenting demands for our services, the QPS has already identified the critical imperative to better understand, quantify and manage those demands and has taken steps to build better capability within QPS to make strategic resource investment decisions. There is also more we plan to do.

In particular, I would like to point out that work is underway to revitalise our internal corporate strategic capability to ameliorate the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) legacy and the return of corporate resources after 7 years from a shared service agency to QPS. The loss of strategic capability and expertise identified by Professor Coaldrake is a real feature of that legacy.

Post PSBA, high level benchmarking undertaken in 2022 indicated that QPS's HR and finance functions were significantly under-resourced compared with other departments, which was limiting their ability to deliver strategic value to QPS. Shared ICT service arrangements through PSBA also adversely impacted ICT strategy development.

Q U E E N S L A N D   P O L I C E   S E R V I C E

We are currently actively identifying and moving to correct key and critical capability gaps within QPS as part of that revitalisation. An example of this is the recently appointed Chief Digital Officer role, which will focus on providing strategic leadership in the Service's digital and data future and expert ICT investment advice. QPS has also appointed a Chief Risk Officer, leading identification and management of strategic risk across the organisation.

Without responding to each and every point raised in your report, I would like to clarify QPS's general position in respect of the four broad themes you have identified.

1. Understanding demands for service

In 2019, the QPS commissioned a strategic review of the service which was undertaken by Mr Neil Greenfield (the Greenfield Report). The Greenfield Report observed that at that time the QPS did not have a full picture of the demands that were placed on QPS which were beyond calls for service; the resource required to meet those demands; and the relative priority between these different demands. The Report noted that the importance of this was well understood by the QPS executive and work was already occurring to better understand demand to assist in strategic and operational decision-making.

In August 2019, the Queensland Police Service, in partnership with Queensland Treasury Corporation, developed a Demand Model and a Cost Attribution Model, specifically focused on Frontline Policing demand. The model draws data from QPRIME, HR Establishment Data, ITAS Data, QCAD Data to provide analytics on actual demand within defined periods of time.
Its intended purpose was to provide an accurate single point of truth to measure and better understand the volume and types of demand facing QPS frontline service.

QPS use the Demand Model to assist in providing an evidence base for requests for police and staff resources. In addition, the Demand Model was used for District Infrastructure reviews by providing information on where potential infrastructure growth sites could be allocated. A by-product of the Demand Model is a series of Demand Dashboards that can be accessed by all QPS employees (not only sworn members). These dashboards provide useful information, down to Divisional level, to assess current state workload demand.
It is acknowledged that not all data is captured in the Demand Model. For example, data from investigations, watchhouses and prosecutions are not incorporated.

As part of addressing this shortfall, QPS worked with an external expert in the first half of 2023 to specifically develop a Domestic and Family Violence Demand Model that does utilise this data. The Domestic and Family Violence Demand Model provides a perspective on the DFV demand met by the QPS workforce at a point in time by using historic data and trends, activity analysis and available resources. The objective of the model is to confidently measure and forecast demand related to domestic and family violence in order to provide QPS with an understanding on future workforce requirements and associated costs. It also assists with identifying areas that require further development and informing opportunities for change.

This model will allow for QPS to account for changes in the environment, such as changes to relevant legislation, population growth and other social factors. Learnings from this body of work will be incorporated into future demand work and there is strong commitment to further evolution and refinement of demand modelling within QPS.

QPS has allocated an additional 3 FTEs to the Analytics team to enhance this capability along with 3 data scientists. An advanced data analytics capability is also being created that will enable the creation of a comprehensive suite of workforce analytics.

QPS has also partnered with the University of Queensland's Centre for Information Resilience - an Australian Research Council (ARC) Industrial Transformation Training Centre funded for 5 years from 2021. This will enable the QPS to leverage the appropriate intellect to assist in driving modelling capability.

QPS also intends establish significant new capability within the finance team focussed on strategic investment modelling and planning (including economic analysis). QPS plans to allocate 14 new FTEs to create this function.

These additional resources will significantly accelerate QPS's modelling capability and support evidence-based resource allocation. It is intended that this capability will continue to mature and become intrinsic in our practices over time.

2. **Planning a workforce for the future**

In conjunction with the demand and investment modelling uplift, the QPS intends to increase strategic workforce capability and planning, to compliment the additional resourcing allocated to drive demand modelling.

It has been identified that this is critical capability to create the foundations for future success.

The combined uplifts in workforce and financial modelling capability, data analytics capability and the appointment of a new dedicated Chief Digital Officer are key foundational steps in enabling QPS to better understand and manage demand, both current and emerging. I am confident these actions will position QPS well to meet the challenges of the future.

QPS's asset planning capability has been proactive in identifying infrastructure maintenance backlogs across both planned maintenance and service (unplanned) maintenance. In response to this challenge, the QPS annual maintenance budget was increased from $19M to $35M in 2021 and this amount is now indexed as part of the budgeting process. This funding envelope is being used to progressively reduce the backlog, as well as to address increasing unplanned maintenance in a large portfolio of aging buildings, often in remote locations where even minor maintenance is both costly and difficult to service due to scarcity of trades. We proactively divest end of life or surplus facilities, in order to reinvest again in capital improvements. Across a state-wide portfolio of around 1500 facilities and units of accommodation, we are making progress and the maintenance backlog is clearing.

3. Responding to calls for service

We acknowledge that demand for service is growing faster than officer numbers. Remarkably, the rate of domestic and family violence breaches has increased by 25% in one year between 2021/22 and 2022/23. The number of domestic and family violence related calls for service increased 26% over the same period (21,378 calls).

We have faced the same challenge as all organisations, and certainly every other policing jurisdiction in Australia: a highly competitive labour market which has impacted attraction and retention. Police officer headcount declined by 202 between 30 June 2022 and 30 June 2023, as police attrition of 685 exceeded the 483 new officers sworn in. This surge in attrition appears to be reducing, although mandatory retirements (at the age of 60) will continue to be an ongoing challenge with an aging workforce.

Having said that, through the tireless efforts and innovative strategies of our People Capability Command, we now have very positive recruitment momentum. At the time of preparing this response there are 587 recruits in training in Brisbane and Townsville and there are currently 1,603 applicants

in the pipeline. We have 320 international and 216 interstate/New Zealand applicants with policing experience being processed, and 16 former QPS officers have returned to service as our new special constables.

Based on current data projections which factor in expected attrition, QPS predicts a combined headcount of 13,841 police officers and recruits in academies by the end of 2025. The graph below depicts the momentum built through numerous QPS recruitment initiatives, including: waiving all police recruit and pre-selection fees; offering a relocation payment of $20,000 to interstate and overseas candidates with policing experience; waiving academy accommodation costs and providing additional financial support to recruits in training.

Recruitment Projection - Police Officer and Recruit Headcount (as at 31 October 2023)
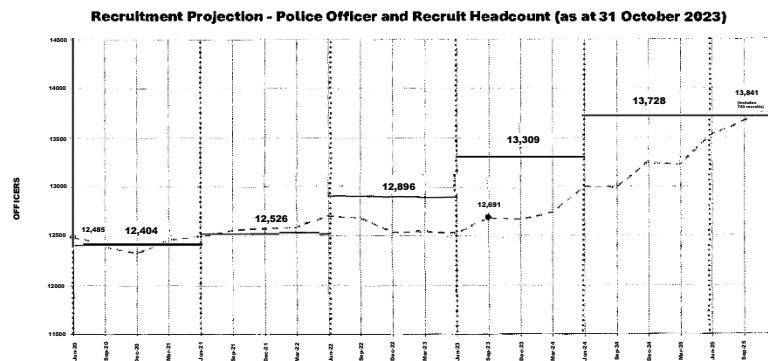
With reference to the 2021-22 Service Delivery Statement (SDS) performance measure relating to of attendance on code 1 & 2 incidents, we acknowledge the error, but point out that this was discovered through our own internal processes in June 2022 and explained in the most recent SDS. Our measure has always been predicated on 000 calls for service; we are amenable to making this explicit in the next SDS.

Of note, QPS has initiated a significant new program of work – the Client Management Program – which aims to deliver a new service-wide call and contact system which will better capture the breadth of demand for service. Whilst the program will include technical renewal and solutions including next generation CAD (computer aided dispatch) and the Policelink CRM, it will also harmonise contemporary telephony on a state-wide basis, and front counter contact data capture. It will modernise the management of urgent, triple zero and digital contact types, and deliver more integration with the wider QPS enterprise architecture. This program is in a rapidly advancing

stage of maturity and has engaged the market with an initial ITO. This work will represent a significant advance in the ability to quantify "front-door" urgent and non-urgent demand, including front-counter demand, positioning QPS to better understand and manage changing demand.

4. Rostering police resources to meet demand

QPS acknowledges the ongoing and continuous need to review rostering practices. Whilst the QPS closed the service delivery program in 2023, our work to improve service delivery has not stopped.

In early 2023, a Rostering Review Steering Committee (the Committee) was established, chaired by Assistant Commissioner Pond. The Committee functions under the authority of the Deputy Commissioner, Regional Operations, to conduct a review of the operational shift allowance (OSA) in accordance with Clause 96 of the *QPS Certified Agreement* 2022; and to enhance public value through the alignment of workforce deployment, business requirements and the expectations of the community and government.

To this end, the Committee has commenced activities to identify and implement strategies to improve understanding the complexity of QPS demand; current QPS rostering systems; the existing posture of work units in the QPS; to identify factors associated with the deployment of human resources; evaluate related legislation, policy and support frameworks; and review the alignment of related activities with employee safety and wellbeing.

It is intended that the new QPS Chief Digital Officer will provide leadership in identifying technology solutions or innovations to alleviate rostering challenges.

Finally I'd like to comment on the subject of overtime.

As pointed out in your audit report, QPS overtime has significantly increased over the last four years. This can be attributed to work such as increased road safety camera operations (all of which occurs outside rostered shifts), unprecedented demands for service during the pandemic, resourcing of safe night precinct requirements, and youth crime related Operation Victor Unison activities.

In 2022-23 financial year $16.5M of overtime was attributed solely to wide load escort duties performed by police officers during that period. Notably,

this overtime is funded by private revenue and not by Queensland Government. None of this additional effort will appear in ordinary rostering. Overtime is a vital lever available to the service which has traditionally enabled the organisation to create agility in a system which regularly experiences unanticipated demand requiring surge response above and beyond rostering resourcing. Having said that, our more recent reality is less about surges and more about constant high and increasing demand.

Conclusion

I am proud of the way that QPS is ably balancing multiple competing imperatives in an extremely challenging environment. We must balance our extensive reform program which involves significant effort and resourcing across the organisation with identifying and taking the steps required to re-build critical internal capability, all while being responsive to increasing demands on our services.

I would like to conclude by acknowledging the police officers and staff who continue to go above and beyond to meet that demand and keep our communities safe.

Yours sincerely

KATARINA CARROLL APM
COMMISSIONER

Responses to recommendations

Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Queensland Police Service

Deploying Police Resources

Response to recommendations provided by QPS on 21 November 2023

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Timeframe for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
We recommend that the Queensland Police Service: 1. Develops a robust model for forecasting demand across the services that: • Builds evidence-based understanding of demand across the QPS regions, commands and specialist operations, including officer time spent on proactive policing and non-frontline administrative work • uses factors and issues that are driving demand, such as demographics, socio-economic elements, trends in offence types and rates, and lessons learnt from major events to inform models that predict demand • factors in other demand related requirements that may not be supported by data, such as meeting community expectations.	Agree	Q2 2024 Build/recruit requisite capability (in addition to existing internal capability) Q4 2024 Program of works developed to be driven by multidisciplinary team; part of this will be exploring use of AI in understanding demand. Q4 2025 Full implementation of Demand model	Delivery will be through blended disciplines: service demand modelling; workforce modelling; financial modelling; and – where possible but yet to be determined - technology enablers. There are many unknowns in approach – these will need to be worked through in project design.

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Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Timeframe for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
2. improves strategic workforce planning including:	Agree	Q2 2024 Establish a dedicated Workforce Strategy function and capability	*This work is already identified and scheduled as part of the QPS Budget Modernisation Program
• establishing a workforce growth target using evidence-based analysis of future demand for service • assessing the workforce skills needed to meet current and future demand, identifying any gaps		Q4 2025 This is contingent on implementation of Demand model (see above)	
• reviewing tasks that need to be done by police officers and those that can be done by staff members		Q4 2025*	
• periodically reviewing the mandatory retirement age requirements		Q1 2025	
• optimising the mix of police officers, and staff members, protective security officers, police liaison officers, and retiring police officers who wish to continue working		Q4 2025*	
• assessing how current and emerging technology can improve service delivery and workforce demand		Q1 2024 – New Chief Digital Officer	
• identifying future needs and planning for equipment and fit-for-purpose building infrastructure.		Q4 2025	
3. improves its response to demand for service by:	Agree		
• reviewing its service delivery model to identify and address challenges and improves its ability to meet demand		Q4 2024	
• reviewing how it handles calls from sources other than 000 to identify any process improvements that will reduce the dispatch time for Code 1 and 2 calls		Q4 2024	
• regularly educating the public on the appropriate use of 000 and Policelink in reporting incidents		Q2 2024	
• using performance information to gain insights into service delivery and support informed decision-making. This includes: – evaluating and assessing the reasons why police do not attend some Code 1 to 3 calls		Q2 2024	

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Queensland Audit Office
Better public services

	Recommendation	Agree/ Disagree	Timeframe for implementation (Quarter and financial year)	Additional comments
	– determining why some regions are not meeting targets for Code 1 and 2 (urgent) calls and deciding whether to establish regional targets.			
4.	improves the usefulness and transparency of its public performance reporting on responding to calls for service by: • reviewing its internal controls over publicly reported performance information • reporting its performance on responding to Code 1 and 2 calls from all sources, not just 000 calls • clearly explaining which type of calls for services are included and not included in its performance reporting for Codes 1 and 2 in its Service Delivery Statements	Agree	Q2 2024	
5.	continues to develop consistent rostering practices to improve how it deploys available resources across the state. This should include: • improve its rostering processes to align resources with demand • improving its rostering processes to align resources with demand • rostering and resourcing at the patrol group level (cluster of stations) rather than at the individual station level to enable more flexible deployment of staff and resources • ensuring the availability of officers allocated to patrol groups and stations is enough to meet demand after considering time for leave and training • analysing patterns of overtime to inform workforce planning • ensuring all staff responsible for rostering are adequately trained in using the rostering system.	Agree	Continuation of an iterative process: scheduled to be complete as at June 2026	

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