



Liberal National Party's proposals for overhauling Queensland's
child protection system

Survey Findings

*On the proposal that a rapid response team be
placed on stand-by for after-hours support*

16 October 2020



Thank you to all who took time from their busy schedules to respond to our survey about the Liberal National Party's proposals for overhauling the child protection system. We trust that you have made a valuable and constructive contribution to the further development and refinement of the policy platforms of Queensland's political parties. We look forward to the informed discussion and debate the survey findings will generate. Following on from our report providing an overview of the survey findings, this is the ninth in the series of detailed reports that addresses the proposal that a rapid response team be placed on stand-by for after-hours support.



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Contents

Introduction	6
About this report and the reports to follow	6
About the survey respondents	6
About the strength of the survey	6
Overall response	7
Responses by stakeholder groups.....	9
Employees of PeakCare Member organisations.....	9
Employees of QATSICPP Member organisations.....	12
Employees of non-Member non-government organisations.....	13
Employees of Government agencies	16
Employees of peak bodies, industry and representative groups	20
Academics.....	22
Private consultants and employees of consultancy or training organisations	23
Parents (and other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system	24
Young people (under 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system	24
Older people (over 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system	25
Foster Carers.....	26
Kinship Carers	27
Others	27

Introduction

Following the announcement on 17 June 2020 of the Liberal National Party's (LNP's) [plans for overhauling Queensland's child protection system](#), PeakCare Queensland Inc.

(PeakCare) and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) conducted a survey to gauge stakeholders' views about the plans. The survey was released on 19 June and closed on 10 July 2020.

PeakCare and QATSICPP will look for similar opportunities to seek feedback about the policy platforms of other political parties as they are released.

About this report and the reports to follow

An [overview of the survey findings](#) was released on 24 August 2020. More detailed reports about the survey findings released since include:

- [On the question of re-naming the Child Safety Department, the Child Protection Force](#)
- [On the proposal to extend payments to Foster Carers until children in their care turn 21](#)
- [On the proposal to increase use of adoption through a new triage model with permanency order targets](#)
- [On the proposal for random compulsory drug tests for people on Intervention with Parental Agreements](#)
- [On the proposal that positive drug tests will require parents to participate in a drug rehabilitation service](#)
- [On the proposal that a second positive drug test will lead to children being placed on foster care under a no-second chances model](#)

This report addresses the question included in our survey – *Do you agree with the proposal that a rapid response team "be placed on stand-by for after-hours support"?*

This report is best read in conjunction with the following reports that address related topics:

- [On the proposal for the Child Protection Force to adopt a hierarchy and rank structure similar to the Police](#)
- [On the proposal for Child Protection Force officers to be on-hand 24-hours a day under new shift arrangements](#)
- [On the proposal that a new team of police investigators be formed to clear backlogs and overhaul investigation procedures for high-risk cases](#)

About the survey respondents

In total, 1,998 people responded to the survey from across 13 identified stakeholder groups including:

Survey respondent stakeholder groups	No (%)
Employees of non-government organisations including:	811 (40.82%)
• PeakCare Member organisation employees	289 (14.54%)

• QATSCIPP Member organisation employees	63 (3.17%)
• Non-Member NGO employees	459 (23.10%)
Employees of Government agencies	633 (31.86%)
Employees of peak bodies or other industry or representative groups	56 (2.82%)
Academics	38 (1.91%)
Private consultants or employees of private consultancy or training organisations	42 (2.11%)
Parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system	65 (3.27%)
Young people (under 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system	15 (0.75%)
Older people (over 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system	42 (2.11%)
Foster Carers	121 (6.09%)
Kinship Carers	35 (1.76%)
Others	129 (6.49%)

Eleven survey respondents skipped the question requesting them to identify the group to which they belonged.

The 129 survey respondents who identified as belonging to the 'others' category described themselves as follows:

Interested community member (e.g. parent, concerned citizen, "just an ordinary person")	39
Retired, semi-retired or former employee of either a government or non-government agency or both	33
Member of a particular professional or occupational group (eg. a barrister, allied health professional)	18
Member of two or more of the listed groups	14
Relative or friend of a Carer or employee of a government or non-government organisation	13
Non-specified connection with child protection system	6
Former Foster Carer	4
Friend of a person who was formerly in care	2

About the strength of the survey

As noted in the overview report, the respondents to the survey are not a representative sample and therefore the results cannot be generalised to specific stakeholder groups or stakeholders as a whole.

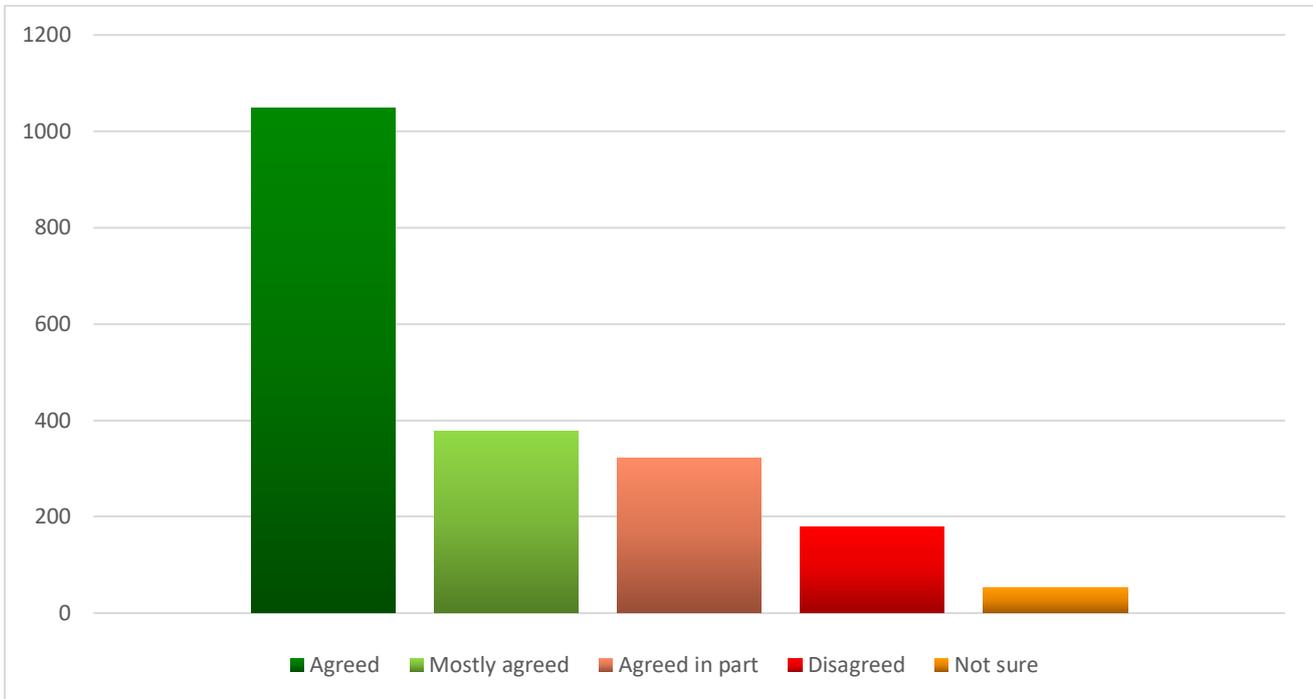
The strength of the survey and its findings lies in the diversity of views that have been collected from within and across stakeholder groups. This provides a rich source of data to generate debate about how to best protect children, promote their development and well-being, and support their families.

Overall response

Of the 1,998 survey respondents, 1,979 answered, and 19 'skipped', this question. A majority of respondents who answered the question agreed or mostly agreed with the proposal.

Specifically, of the 1,979 respondents who answered this question:

- 1,048 (52.96%) agreed with the proposal
- 377 (19.05%) mostly agreed
- 322 (16.27%) agreed only in part
- 179 (9.04%) disagreed, and
- 53 (2.68%) indicated that they were not sure



A majority of respondents (i.e. 50% or more) within all of the 13 stakeholder groups agreed or mostly agreed with the proposal:

- Employees of PeakCare member organisations (68.19%)
- Employees of QATSICPP member organisations (73.01%)
- Employees of non-government organisations that are not a member organisation of either PeakCare or QATSICPP (80.83%)
- Employees of government agencies (59.87%)
- Employees of a peak body or other industry or representative group (73.21%)
- Academics (57.89%)
- Consultants and employees of private consultancy or training services (68.29%)
- Parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system (89.06%)
- Young people (under 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system (86.66%)
- Older people (over 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system (85.36%)
- Foster Carers (89.92%)

- Kinship Carers (88.58%)
- Others (78.13%)

Noting that not all respondents entered additional comments into the survey, a review of those who were entered identified the following key themes.

After hours support

Many respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would:

- improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families
- improve the existing responses
- support the efforts of existing Child Safety staff
- improve the support of carers

Rapid response and staff on hand 24 hours

Some respondents however questioned the relationship between the proposals for a rapid response capacity and involving staff being on hand 24-hours, suggesting if you have one you do not need the other.

Considerations

Other respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including:

- purpose and function
- staff composition of the team
- service model
- working conditions
- support and training of staff
- regional, rural and remote coverage
- funding
- availability of other services to support the response
- working collaboratively with partners and other service systems

Further information

A number of respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including:

- its purpose and function
- its operation

- how it would be different from current arrangements
- the evidence supporting it
- funding of the proposal

Not necessary or not the issue

Many respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand-by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue.

Some of these respondents suggested that this capacity already existed and/or existing capacity should be enhanced to cover the need.

Other respondents expressed concern about the connotations of the proposal and its impact on children and families and suggested there would be no additional benefit to be gained from its introduction. Some suggested a greater focus should be placed on:

- additional Child Safety staff and support services
- early intervention and working with families
- working proactively with communities
- broader reform of the child protection system

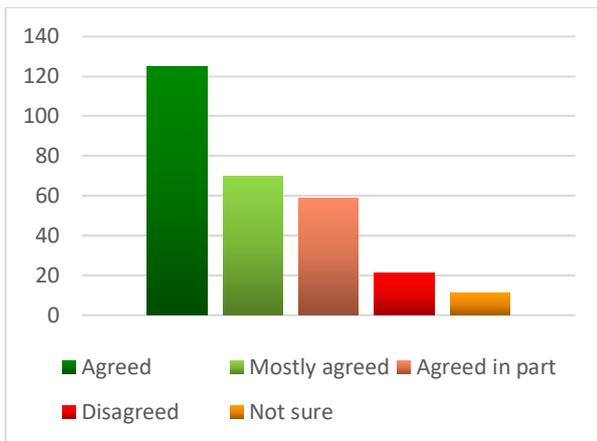
Responses by stakeholder groups

Employees of PeakCare Member organisations

Of the 286 employees of PeakCare Member organisations who answered this question:

- 125 (43.71%) agreed with this proposal
- 70 (24.48%) mostly agreed
- 59 (20.63%) agreed only in part
- 21 (7.34%) disagreed, and
- 11 (3.85%) indicated that they were not sure

Three respondents skipped this question.



102 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Most respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *After hours is when some people are most vulnerable*
- *Absolutely. Children need to know they can be kept safe from harm no matter the time of day or night*
- *Having worked with the City of Edinburgh Emergency Social Work Service which provided an outreach and emergency accommodation for families to avoid receptions into care I have seen great merit in such a system*

- *It doesn't make sense that statutory child protection staff work business hours only and often out of hours responses are limited*
- *I do agree with this as a crisis can happen after hours and sometimes children end up on office floors which is not in any way ideal*
- *This could be a useful adjunct to the After Hours Child Safety Service*
- *Yes, I think the after-hours space could do with some additional staff and funding*
- *I do believe there should be a rapid response component to the team*

Considerations

Many respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; the service model; working conditions; support and training of staff; rural and remote coverage; funding; and the availability of other services to support the response:

- *It would depend on the purpose and function of the rapid response team. If they are to attend houses amidst crisis and after hours then this may possibly work*
- *This proposal has some merit, as long as there were clear principles and guidelines detailing the role of the team, and preferably it needs to be multidisciplinary. There also needs to be further thought about 'after hours support' for whom?*
- *ONLY if child safe systems are in place to encourage minimal harm to child (physical as well as emotional and psychological), family repatriation is prioritized, families are offered support to safely bring children back, and cultural advice and consultation is used in relation to all aboriginal families*
- *We need better after hours services and response from our child protection system. However, I am concerned about how a 'rapid response team' would be structured considering the idea from the LNP is to move towards a policing structure for Child Safety services. Will this rapid response team come from a punitive, policing approach or will it be trauma-informed and meet the safety needs of the children?*

- *Yes I do think a team of social workers / DFV specialists that can work in collaboration with first responders could strengthen the service system however the detail of this team - it's mandate and service delivery model would need to be thrashed out to ensure cultural fit and alignment within the current service system design. Suggestions such as these need to be worked from the ground up and be clear about their purpose and how they fit in a greater service system*
- *I think that if Child Safety Officers are part of a rapid response team for after hours this would potentially improve the after hours responses*
- *A response team would be helpful but I am opposed to police presence that could perpetuate conflict and hardship for families who are already struggling in the system*
- *There could be child safety officers that sit within police, similarly to domestic violence workers who sit in vulnerable people units*
- *I agree that there needs to be after-hours support available but would have thought that this was already provided. I do not agree with the proposal to have police officers being the only people to comprise the response team although I recognise that their assistance may be required*
- *Within the context of a child centred, trauma informed service model with sufficient supports and integration from relevant stakeholders to meet the needs of the child*
- *Only if it was in the NGO sector*
- *I think that the Department needs capacity to respond to 24hr/5day/10day etc notifications within the time frames that are decided appropriate. I am not sure if there are enough cases warranting a rapid response team 24 hours a day*
- *If they were workers would need to be paid appropriately with appropriate breaks, shift allowances, extra time off and restrictions on number of overnight shifts. Also have unions central in these negotiations*
- *If managed well in terms of staff wellbeing and practice, I believe this approach could be of benefit. It could allow for an alternative to a police response to matters relating to child safety*
- *As long as they are appropriately trained in trauma as they could cause more harm than good for families*
- *Consideration will need to be given to rural and remote regions and how stand by or after-hours support will be covered in these areas*
- *This will come at a significant cost*
- *If children are at risk of harm, there should be immediate response. However, the ability for a worker to put a plan in action may be based on what other services are open*
- *Am aware that current after hours support e.g. responding to Police is not as helpful or responsive as it should be. Traumatized children should not be sitting in Police stations or hospitals for hours at night waiting for the Dept to respond. Perhaps there could be a designated 'safe house' (staffed appropriately) for children to be taken to as an interim measure, when first brought into care*
- *Title is unhelpful, but an immediate response team is important. They do need fair remuneration, access to the same resources, or even extra resources under best endeavours in memorandums of understanding with other services. The reality is all Child Protection services do not have enough crisis/ immediate/ short term foster carers, let alone to meet and adhere to cultural policy, and there has never been consultations within local communities to help problem solve this issue!*

Further information

A number of respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its purpose and function; its operation; and how it would be different from current arrangements; the evidence supporting it:

- *Not sure what the proposal is*
- *My answer to this question is entirely based on a lack of knowledge of what this team's role is. If it is to provide support to families, child safety, police, agencies, then yes, I agree. If it leans more towards punitive or criminalisation of matters, then no*
- *Obviously, where there is a serious risk of imminent harm to a child, particularly where this would be life threatening, then it is desirable that there are people available to take the necessary action. However, this proposal*

needs greater clarity in relation to the purpose of a 'rapid response team'. Is it envisaged that there would only be one team? How does that work geographically in Qld? What research and evidence supports this model?

- *How would this differ from the after hours service?*
- *Would need to more about how they will work and what they will do that would improve the current system*
- *Will there also be a rapid response team on during normal business hours?*
- *Wouldn't say no to the idea but if the department is adequately staffed 24/7, wouldn't there always be a team available to respond? Would this one RRT be required to go anywhere in the state at short notice?*
- *Has the lack of such a team been an issue previously?*

Not necessary or not the issue

Many respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support, suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue.

Some of these respondents suggested that this capacity already existed; existing capacity should be enhanced to cover the needs; or existing services should be held accountable:

- *Already occurs – more staff required*
- *Rapid response already occurs, more staff are needed in the IA space so that 5 and 10 days can be actioned in those time frames*
- *For the most part that already happens. I feel this whole proposal is suggesting that there isn't already things in place that work, which there are, however further funding and resources would achieve better results*
- *No need for a rapid response team. There may be merit in strengthening a co-responder approach where QPS officers and Child Safety staff visit homes together to maintain the safety of children, all family members and Child Safety staff - but this should not be set up as a 'Force'*
- *CPIU are available 24/7, they are just under resourced*

- *This just sounds like more funds for a service already in place that is meant to respond but doesn't*
- *Why not make the existing after hours service in place more accountable?*

Other respondents expressed concern about the connotations of the proposal and its impact on children and families, and suggested a greater focus be placed on early intervention and working with families, and broader reform of the child protection system:

- *We are not talking about a military or policing approach for families, children and young people. There needs to be a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities - the departmental child safety officers should not be policing - they need to be supported by police and police need to be the 'first line' responders where and when there is serious abuse and/or harming of children and young people*
- *You are making a decision based on the worst of times for the people, make an assessment of not only the people during a crisis but also the whole community/family that are supporting them rather than quick jerk responses*
- *If there is imminent risk to a child, police are likely to respond to ensure safety. Having a system rock up in the middle of the night that families do not perceive positively, is not likely to enable addressing any challenges a parent has in their capacity to parent*
- *If Child Safety were to decrease their CSO caseloads, employ more staff, increase the level of support provided and allocate caseloads appropriately (e.g. investigation and assessment as one area, transitions as one area or even based on development such as CSO works with children aged 0-6). Alongside an increase in the early intervention support systems for families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and staff (internal and external) they would be better placed to do more thorough assessments and investigations which would hopefully result in better outcomes for families, children and young people. They also require CSOs who are able to provide intensive family support at the IPA stage (currently caseloads are too high)*
- *This is the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff approach - the focus needs to be on prevention; early intervention; increased collaboration and*

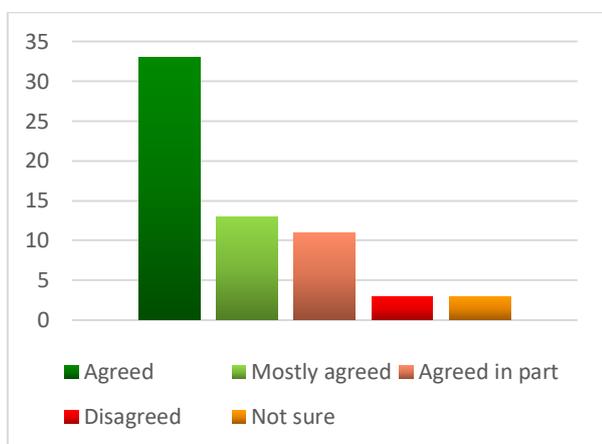
feedback from Non-Government Child Protection programs and agencies

- *Waste of time, it's too late by then... There should be an early intervention team that is more effective and better funded than what is currently available for support before this point. If a child is deemed by anyone that they need a rapid after hours response team available then they should already be removed*
- *This could back up existing structures however we also need to have other services on the ground to support families once identified at risk. There are major blockages in the system that is in crisis and a comprehensive review of the Dept and community services is needed rather than this short sighted measure*
- *The hours Child Safety Officers work isn't the issue and this will be an expensive and unnecessary structure, they are not police and shouldn't be doing the job of police; broader reforms are required to improve the child protection system*

Employees of QATSICPP Member organisations

Of the 63 employees of QATSICPP Member organisations who answered this question:

- 33 (52.38%) agreed with the proposal
- 13 (20.63%) mostly agreed
- 11 (17.46%) agreed only in part
- 3 (4.76%) disagreed, and
- 3 (4.76%) indicated that they were not sure



19 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Most respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *A rapid response team could provide an opportunity to be more responsive to urgent need or high level risk*
- *Harm to children happens 24/7. Need for protection must match*
- *It is always good to have an after hours team to respond to matters as soon as possible to assist with concerns*
- *There should be better after hours support across the sector. When families are experiencing the stresses*
- *Often abuse happens late. This usually leads to costly placements for young people and excessive over time for already over worked CSO's and CSSO's*

Considerations

Some respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; funding; and the availability of other services to support response:

- *For critical safety and danger concerns, this would be helpful. In addition, these workers would need to have good connection to after hours services such as counsellors and refuges so that immediate safety can be assured. Incarceration should be the last option for those who are causing harm to children especially parents/carers who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders*
- *Made up of qualified and experienced social workers*
- *As long as the team includes other professionals including social workers mental health experts*
- *This should be a combination of Child Safety workers and Police. This will ensure a more rounded assessment of the risk and how to*

advocate for the family and children from a wholesome perspective

- *Not a bad idea, however sounds expensive if you were to locate this stand by team in every office in Queensland. Are they proposing to fully fund this?*
- *For this to be done effectively there needs to be other system changes such as availability of emergency placements afterhours rather than what is happening now which is that Child Safety Staff are scrambling to find placements for children and young people most of the time as there are limited numbers of carers and organisations that support Foster and Kinship Carers as well as emergency placements often do not work collaboratively with the Department staff due to (in part) the overwhelming pressure on approved carers to take on more children and young people*

Further information

Two respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its purpose and function:

- *I'm confused - is the Rapid Response Team dealing with a terrorist threat or a family and child protection matter? If the RPT remove a child at night, where will the child go? The watchhouses?*
- *Maybe - I don't know what this means - support for families? Support for staff? If its support for cops – NO*

Not necessary or not the issue

Some respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary:

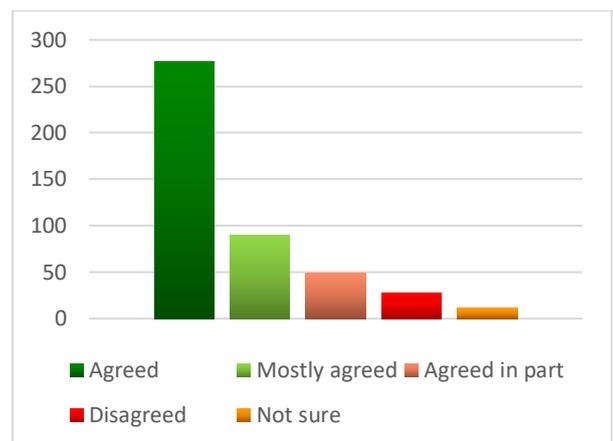
- *Fund the current service appropriately and you will not need another service*
- *Child Safety currently have this in place?*
- *Surely this need can be addressed as part of a police response, if necessary*
- *There is already an after hours team who can do this in conjunction with QPS... this is just political spin*

Employees of non-Member non-government organisations

Of the 454 employees of non-government organisations that are not Members of either PeakCare or QATSICPP who answered this question:

- 277 (61.01%) agreed with the proposal
- 90 (19.82%) mostly agreed
- 49 (10.79%) agreed only in part
- 27 (5.95%) disagreed, and
- 11 (2.42%) indicated that they were not sure

Five respondents skipped this question.



103 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Most respondents supported the need for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *Absolutely agree with this. Child protection issues do not occur within office hours Monday to Friday. Families and children in particular require support at crisis point*
- *Our children need to be safe 24hrs a day, this option at least would create the possibility that urgent action is taken when needed*
- *Absolutely. This is when the parents have full parental responsibilities of all their children, no supports other than another parent if they have them, no 'eyes on the children' and nobody to reach out to if they are not coping or something is happening in the family. Someone needs to be*

there to support the children when high risk events are happening within the home at night

- *Yes - immediate action needs to be taken for some families struggling with substance abuse or mental illnesses. Issues can arise instantly after children have been returned to their families*
- *Where imminency is indicated outside of a 9-5 period. Sometimes we've seen a 24-hour notification held until afternoon when an office could be advised earlier in the day, meaning work outside of hours (which can contribute to low retention)*
- *Night time and weekends is when the harm happens most and the arrangements that are made at these times are subpar due to lack of support*
- *Current after hours support is slow to respond and limited in ability to help*
- *I have sometimes worried that after hours child safety services were inadequate. QPS welfare checks have been used effectively over the years, but having dedicated, experienced statutory Child Safety officers to augment these checks may be helpful where serious and immediate danger to children is suspected*

Rapid response and staff on hand 24 hours

Some respondents however questioned the relationship between the proposals for a rapid response capacity and involving staff being on hand 24 hours, suggesting if you have one you do not need the other. Most of these respondents indicated a preference for staff being on-hand 24 hours over a rapid response team on standby for after-hours support:

- *What happened to the After Hours Team that was previously in place?*
- *Why would this be needed if officers were covering shifts 24 hours, 7 days a week? Only required if the shifts were not happening*
- *Not sure what you mean by this. As stated above 24 hr after hours support would really help*
- *If the Force was 24-7 there would be no need for after hours support as someone would be readily available. I do believe there may be added security measures needed to protect staff*
- *Not really sure what this means: I support the resourcing of 'after hours'. I do NOT support language that feels punitive and aggressive:*

'rapid response' seems very 'charge in on a white horse with guns blazing' how about 24/7 support?

- *I don't like the language 'rapid response team' - it sounds like another emergency service or swat team. This is the I and A team in current language - they should be 24/7 rostered and it's about working with the parents and children*

Considerations

Many respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; the service model; working conditions; support and training of staff; rural and remote coverage; funding; and the availability of other services to support the response:

- *I partly agree as yes we need to respond to the community needs and child protection is not 9-5pm. However, it needs to be a responsive service aimed at helping the community*
- *Depending on how the structure looks*
- *I generally agree with having a responsive service but I am wary, as some of the tactics I have seen employed by after hours teams have been shocking, unnecessary, traumatising to children and their families and I could not endorse the use of after hours teams that use tactics that have such negative impacts without achieving anything useful that could not have been achieved through a more supportive frontline approach*
- *A team of appropriate workers who could respond to the needs to young people in care, and support families after hours to maintain safety with their children would be useful. However, I believe modelling this after a 'rapid response team' that is designed to respond to crime is not appropriate*
- *Suitably qualified social workers can choose to work alongside of the Police in Regions with high intake of out of hour crisis. These community liaison staff can be there to offer support and therapeutic guidance to officers when required. Not all regions will need this*
- *While the after-hours office can handle a lot of the calls that come in after- hours, this needs to include being able to do home visits for crisis situations. Perhaps it would be better for*

selected CSO's to be embedded within the police force for this purpose as these crisis situations are likely to require police presence anyway

- *Child protection issues arise 24/7 not just during business hours and QPS are not adequately trained to respond specifically to child protection issues as this should not be their core work. QPS should support, not lead Child Safety in responding to outside hours child protection issues*
- *I agree that a rapid response team being available could be useful. I would question its usefulness in the sense that the QPS already have the same powers as child safety officers under the Child Protection Act in QLD so I don't see why they could not fulfil this role. Maybe place child protection specific positions in the QPS?*
- *If they worked jointly with Child Safety and other services this could be helpful*
- *This is needed in conjunction with CSAH in order to respond State-wide to significant incidents*
- *Each CSSC should be allocated a team, with regular team meeting with police, outreach, residentials, child youth mental health and cultural liaisons*
- *Yes, however, I feel this can be achieved with more Police Officers being trained in dealing with Child Protection matters rather than overhauling the current system*
- *I do believe that the Investigation and Assessment team is already on standby for some instances but would love if they can have their team do removals at night rather than children sitting in the police station. When working remotely this occurred as some children were required to be brought into the city for placements. Where as now working on the coast you see children being removed by police and potentially staying there all night till a placement has been found, as there is only the Brisbane afterhours team that don't travel, which can be traumatising for children sitting in a sterile non-friendly environment at the police station*
- *Totally agree, this would work in larger metropolitan areas. Officers working in more rural and remote areas and where a rapid response is needed, can be given a geographical area where they can respond within a few hours and not days or weeks. Can they not be rostered*

either in a hospital or police station during these times of standby where there is some element of safety for these workers, especially when working in these areas. During what could be seen as normal 8.30-5 working hours could they not be placed with existing service providers that do an element of child safety work, early intervention, etc. work and these workers then can assist with the visit if necessary and provide immediate support

- *It would have to be very well managed to prevent burn-out*
- *Who supports this rapid response team in the after hours time slot?*
- *So long as there is appropriate pay, and that these people who are part of the team are CP specialists, so workers from CSYW*
- *As long as they are properly trained as crisis response workers and will be sensitive to mental health and won't just rock up and arrest or apprehend*
- *As above, only if everyone involved is properly trained and trauma- and domestic violence-informed*
- *Yes, needs to be funded adequately*
- *There needs to be greater services available after hours for the emergency cases. In Foster Care agencies we see after hours support as vital but unfortunately this isn't always married with Child Safety frameworks or practices around bringing children into care after hours*
- *I think there needs to be transitional safe houses on stand by. Should not have to look for a carer late at night*
- *Agree, this is needed in terms of emergency placements. However, consideration must be taken when looking at what this means for community organisations in terms of their after hours staffing and ability to support emergency placements etc*

Further information

A number of respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its purpose and function; its operation; and how it would be different from current arrangements; the evidence supporting it:

- *Is this required because communication between departments/services is not happening? Is re-branding and changing what building people sit*

in, going to really change anything for the better? After-hours support is definitely needed, but what will that 'support' look like (who is it supporting) and what kind of assessments (and training) will be required of this team?

- *What does this actually look like though? Hard to comment on such a vague statement without context*
- *Part of our role is to provide On Call for a week on a rotating roster, this is on top of our standard 40 hour week. If On Call is busy or you spend a sleepless night attending to On Call matters it makes the work week extremely difficult. How this would look would need to be clearly defined before an informed decision could be made*

Not necessary or not the issue

Many respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue.

Some of these respondents suggested that this capacity already existed and/or existing capacity should be enhanced to cover the needs:

- *We currently have a CPIU and out of hours system to respond to children at risk*
- *There are already emergency teams. There are also response teams or investigation teams that deal with urgent child protection matters*
- *There already kind of is. How many teams would be required and how many people? Seems overkill when police can respond 24/7*
- *This already exists. Police and ambulance are available 24/7 to respond to emergency calls. There might be call for a child protection response unit to be available 24hours within police department and situating a child safety officer within this team may help to resolve this gap in response. Child Safety have after hours phone service and response staff*
- *Crisis services are already available, and QPS should continue to fill this role, and refer to child protection as needed; perhaps a consultative role filled by senior child protection workers to be available for QPS Officers after hours?*
- *After hours child safety officers need more support and more staffing to support the after hours system and allow for them to go out and attend homes*

Other respondents indicated that a rapid response was not the issue suggesting there would no additional benefit, there is a need for additional staff and support services, and there are broader systemic issues to be addressed:

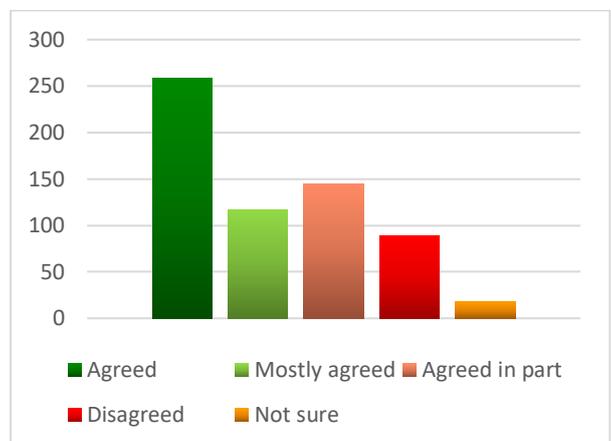
- *Sounds flash but a lot of extra money for no added benefit*
- *There are emergency services already in place that can support families and children until opening business hours. Increasing frontline caseworkers so more families can be seen and assessed. Increasing family support services to provide avenues for families to be referred*
- *It is just more red tape in a fallen system*

Employees of Government agencies

Of the 628 employees of Government agencies who answered this question:

- 259 (41.24%) agreed with the proposal
- 117 (18.63%) mostly agreed
- 145 (23.09%) agreed only in part
- 89 (14.17%) disagreed, and
- 18 (2.87%) indicated that they were not sure

Five respondents skipped this question.



218 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; it would improve the existing responses; and it would support the efforts of existing Child Safety staff:

- *Yes, as there are children and young people who are at risk during the weekends/nights that are not being sighted until Monday, when the reports come in on Friday night*
- *There is currently one service for child safety after hours which services the whole state. Due to staffing anomalies, there often is not sufficient staff coverage across this area, limiting face to face response for children & families after hours. There is also difficulty servicing immediate concerns for the state from one remote location. Children deserve a response after hours that values their safety and protection*
- *Many CSSC's already have a roster for jobs that require after hours response as we all know the work does not magically switch off at 5pm, and we frequently get placements which require children to be collected by 6am. I have worked as early as 4:30am and as late as 1am with no penalty rates, and often not even flex time. Having a team properly resourced to support children and families after hours would be good*
- *I think this is an absolutely fantastic idea. As stated above, it may increase the chances that staff who are working during the day can flag issues and worries with the local after hours staff, who can follow up and provide afterhours assistance. This may mean that staff are more likely to mentally 'clock off' when they finish work, something that is really hard to do at the moment*
- *Afterhours has always been underfunded and resource lacking, so a boost in this sector is definitely needed to promote better practice by having more CSOs in afterhours*
- *This would be helpful as there is only a phone service currently through child safety after hours in Brisbane. It is difficult for them to co-ordinate good support or response to crisis in communities outside Brisbane and the workers often don't have local knowledge. Child safety officers also have already usually completed a full day of work, when they may be given information about a risk or crisis that may occur after hours, so usually they cannot follow up until the next day*

Rapid response and staff on hand 24 hours

Some respondents however questioned the relationship between the proposals for a rapid

response capacity and involving staff being on hand 24 hours, suggesting if you have one you do not need the other:

- *This needs further explanation as to what it would entail and for what purpose, particularly if there is a 24/7 staffing model*
- *Either have CSOs on the ground 24/7, or have a Rapid Response Team. Doing both will cost a fortune*
- *That would make more sense than making an entire workforce be 24 hours all the time especially as the department does not have enough money to do this. It would take a huge investment to supply three times the staff that would be needed to make a 24 hour workforce*
- *This suggestion is more palatable and would aid in relieving QPS officers responding to child protection matters. It means that there would be child protection officers ready to respond*
- *I think a rapid response team on stand by after hours makes a lot more sense than having 2x 8 hour shifts*

Considerations

Many respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; the service model; working conditions; support and training of staff; rural and remote coverage; funding; the availability of other services to support the response; and working with collaboratively with partners and other service systems:

- *The terms of engagement would need to be exceptionally clear for this to work but unfortunately the nature of the work is often too complex for such clearly defined engagement policies*
- *This greatly depends on the nature of the after-hours support. Rapid response in itself requires a level of competence and skill, but also compassion for the children being removed and a significant understanding of the trauma caused by disrupted attachment*
- *Not clear what they would do but a team that offers intensive family support for children on the edge of care due to parents struggling to respond to behavioural/relationship difficulties would be helpful*

- *I agree that having more staff available outside of hours could be useful, but the cases in the media appear to be the result of systemic issues (lack of staff or experienced staff) and case load issues (more than the recommended caseloads for CSO's) meaning CSO's can't do quality work with families and everyone is working in crisis*
- *I do think qualified and trained professionals need to be part of an available workforce*
- *Only if it is with experienced Child Protection workers*
- *As long as it is multi-agency and well trained top professionals*
- *Seems like a reasonable suggestion as long as staff are remunerated appropriately*
- *Child safety has tried similar things previously but has never been able to fully staff them. After hours services already exist but should be regionally based, not just in Brisbane*
- *If this was a team within each Region within the Department I would agree if they worked alongside the CSSC where they needed the assistance*
- *At least on a regional level, all Child Safety Service Centres should have a team available. The reliance on Police to conduct the work of Child Safety outside of business hours is a disservice to the children and families, and a reliance on Police Officers to be highly skilled in Child Protection*
- *Yes but these would need to be small teams in each region/office to attend to urgent/immediate danger situations and not to undertake other essential business*
- *The 24 hours service currently would be best placed to be enhanced with additional resources. The resources could also be increased regionally so that the response is decentralised. The downside to that is the increased cost in team leaders and managers required to ensure that the front line staff are able to complete the required tasks*
- *The entire state of Queensland requires coverage. This is managed by Child Safety After Hours who, in the event of an urgent situation, will recruit the support of QPS or local supports to respond to place based issues. To have a 'rapid response team' on standby across the entire state would be a waste of funds. It would be more beneficial to have 'hubs' of CSAHSC staff to provide more place-based support after hours*
- *This would only work if staff in the CSSC who regularly work with these families are given enough time and resources to document their daily work prior to finishing for the day, as 'response teams' or similar who are proposed to respond to families need all relevant information prior to making decisions. Have multiple 'responders' in various locations (one in a CSSC and one in after hours capacity), unless properly thought through, creates risks for information to fall through the gaps and bad decisions to be made*
- *The department has the After Hours CSSC now. Having staff being able to visit families / investigate allegations of harm after hours and on the weekends would be beneficial - but again staff safety must be considered*
- *It would be beneficial that CSO's are based in the CPIU to work alongside QPS. This will enhance relationships between QPS and regular CSO's. They will respond to the immediate severe incidents to assess immediate safety of children post significant DV related incident, accident or call out to a violent incident where children are present. This will allow minimal time for parents to coach children on their responses and get a 'real time' experience of just how significant such an incident was that the children were exposed to, in order to determine level of harm and future risk of harm*
- *As long as they are well informed about the family and current intervention. They should be able to call the team leader of the service centre on call and talk to them about the family to help make decisions and act*
- *I am surprised really that Queensland hasn't implemented this as yet. Other states have a similar team that sit with the police service in their state, and have a small yet specialised and experienced team to go out on emergent calls. I think that this should occur to address worries in a timely but also situational and contextual manner. The only challenge would be getting offices to work together to accept work that may come back to their individual offices, as there is always disagreement between offices as to what should be where, which is really sad that we are putting our own needs ahead of the children's needs*

- *I think it would be better to have more after hours staff across the state to be able to attend any priority investigations to apply a child safety lens. After hours staff are physically located in Brisbane, so having more staff across the state able to respond could be beneficial*
- *This would work in the city but not all high risk cases happen in the city. You would be better off having an on call system that has the authority to respond to extremely urgent situations in all areas of the state*
- *Child Safety After Hours already provides this function, however the availability of remote or regional after hours child safety officers or on-call workers would possibly be of benefit*
- *I don't think this is a bad idea but I worry about where the staff might come from, and whether child safety officers may be overworked*
- *Sounds good in theory, will require significant funding*
- *I feel this is needed, I do wonder about how we can work with our agency partners like police or health to provide a holistic child centred response*
- *It would need to work hand in hand with other systems, including therapeutic support for children and young people, mental health systems, domestic and family violence support systems and the foster care system. Simply removing children from families is not the answer to keeping children safe, it needs to sit alongside work that supports families to make changes to keep children safe*

Further information

A number of respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its purpose and function; its operation; and the evidence supporting it:

- *What would this 'rapid response team' do exactly? This isn't very clear*
- *How would this work in reality is the question? How do you do this from a state coverage perspective?*
- *I haven't seen or heard of a particular need for this or a situation that has occurred when this arrangement would have helped a specific case so it's difficult to comment on the need for this*

Not necessary or not the issue

Many respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue.

Some of these respondents suggested that this capacity already existed and/or existing capacity should be enhanced to cover the needs:

- *There is already after hours support. The Child Safety After Hours Service Centre is a statewide service that provides after hours responses to clients of the department, members of the public and staff from government departments and community agencies in relation to child protection matters. It is the contact point when there are concerns after hours that a child has been harmed or may be at risk of harm, and provides support for foster and kinship carers. It is unclear how a rapid response team on standby after hours is different to this*
- *There is a rapid response team after hours - the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre, who partner effectively with Police across the state. It could be argued that they could be far better resourced and given more staffing, but this is a long running system that has been working relatively efficiently within the resourcing constraints it has. Most of the challenges regarding the effectiveness of this unit that I have both experienced and been made aware of, could and would be addressed with increased resourcing*
- *For every single child subject to departmental involvement, there is always someone nominated to be on-call (e.g. Manager of a CSSC etc), so there is always a time when an urgent decision or recommendation can be made. If this decision or recommendation requires action, this is often able to be conducted or progressed with other agencies support (eg: police, hospital, after hours etc)*
- *I thought this is what After House was for. Let's not forget that Child Safety does actually operate 24 hours a day and that the CSO's who work in After Hours do 'rapidly respond' and are already 'on stand by for after-hours support'. The language around all of this is ridiculous and hysterical and is manufactured to create a sense of emergency in the eyes of the public, so that the opposition can problematise the current system and be perceived as saving the day. The*

case of Mason Leigh did not occur in one night! Sadly, this happened over an extended period of time and what the opposition are proposing is not the answer

- There needs to be more staff in the after hours service, the development of the name 'rapid response team' won't correct the issue, staffing will
- This can be addressed by QPS, they are able to respond during out of office hours. It would be more beneficial for QPS to have specific child protection training and also most police officers have no knowledge of the Child Protection Act
- This wouldn't be achievable in regional Queensland. QPS officers are authorised under the CPA to complete removals/TAOs etc however rarely do so. QPS needs more child protection training so that they are more likely to enact The CPA when required
- This is covered by existing on call arrangements but needs to be better funded
- Further funding and resources should be provided to the current Child Safety After Hours Unit to ensure a 'rapid response' allowing CSSC staff to rest and have a break in the evenings and weekends and not impose shift work when there is already a unit able to respond
- After hours are exceptionally skilled workers who choose to work outside of business hours. On-call work is damaging to long term health of workers, and worker retention
- We already have this by way of the after-hours child safety service centre. We need child protection professionals operating under our framework for practice to guide urgent intervention as required

Other respondents suggested other ways of meeting the need including improving QPS capacity increasing the number of CSOs to decrease caseloads, being more proactive and collaborative in working with the community, and more effective reporting processes:

- This proposal is not feasible. It would be better to pay departmental staff overtime for the extra hours they presently work to complete investigations and to do needed casework
- We need more CSO's to manage caseloads and see improved long term outcomes. We already have after hours and IA workers responding to 24hr notifications. The children are slipping

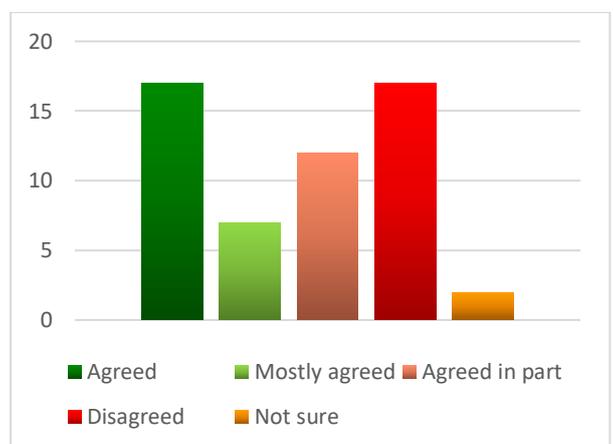
through the cracks because caseloads are too high

- If funding is available, fund the current Child Protection system so that caseloads can be decreased and further support can be provided to families, reducing risk
- I do not think it is required. While there is always work to be undertaken and we must protect the young, for the most part whether an investigation is done 12hours earlier it would not make a lot of difference to the outcome or to the harm already suffered. Child Safety is reactive, if we were more proactive and had a greater footprint in the community which allowed us to work with community in a proactive and collaborative way where we are seen as there to help opposed to being seen to be there just remove children
- Effective reporting processes will reduce the need for emergency teams. Spend a little on making it easier to report abuse and neglect. Because spending hours on hold to Child Safety with calls going unanswered is a barrier to reporting

Employees of peak bodies, industry and representative groups

Of the 56 employees of peak bodies, industry and representative groups who answered this question:

- 25 (44.64%) agreed with this proposal
- 16 (28.57%) mostly agreed
- 11 (19.64%) agreed only in part, and
- 4 (7.14%) disagreed



21 of the respondents within this stakeholder commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *There are no safety networks for children after hours or on weekends, i.e. day care or school. Children have no support when they are in the most need of protection*
- *Nothing worse than 5:00pm roll around especially on a Friday most incidents occur around this time due to clarification and permissions being sought from the CSO who isn't there to provide and after hours workers who generally needed a background story before being able to make a decision*
- *There should be no mucking around in this day and age when it comes to the protection of children. The consequences of not doing so are extremely high for our society and the lives of individuals*
- *The contact is needed that is better than it is now. Yes, stand by option would be an asset*

Considerations

Other respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; service model; working conditions; support and training of staff; and availability of other services to support the response:

- *As long as it is balanced with support and acknowledgement of the issues facing the parents but still clarity about safety of the care and environment for the children. Mixed skill team like in other states and the UK*
- *If that team includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families - no sense sending a team without appropriate skills*
- *Yes a rapid response team is appropriate for 'hot spot' areas. Possibly not needed all over the state unless data suggests otherwise*

- *After hours support outside of the Brisbane CBD as opposed to a rostered system may be a more reasonable approach. If these systems are being modelled after the police then officers of the department should have access to overtime (something very rarely seen in the department now despite everyone working outside of 9-5 on a regular basis) and appropriate measures so that departmental officers aren't being overworked as they currently are. Additionally, given the complex nature of the work, the pay scales of CSOs should be increased significantly (PO2 should start at the PO3.1 wage), currently new graduates are able to earn the same wage as CSOs working in the NGO sector where they hold almost no risk and are provided reasonable caseloads, meaning that the only thing enticing people to work for the government is to improve families lives and help children*
- *This has been attempted before and the flaw was that rapid response teams are sent in at a moment's notice across the state (where they will not know the local conditions) giving a message that the local child safety staff are inadequate. If this was done as a support service for those existing staff, whereby they could access specialist knowledge when they or their manager considers this to be useful to achieving better outcomes for children then it could be a welcome addition to under resourced Child Safety Service Centres*
- *As long as they are trauma informed trained and understand the how to respond appropriately*
- *Yes however arrangements would need to be made if these persons were rostered on the following day*
- *I believe this may have merit however bit is not just statutory officers that have a responsibility here and often non-government agencies working with families have direct sight of these families and don't report. Maybe part of the fix is to ensure non-government support program know and adhere to their obligation to place children first and not the family*

Further information

One respondent sought further information about the proposal:

- *Is this team going to be social workers who are trained in trauma response?*

Not necessary or not the issue

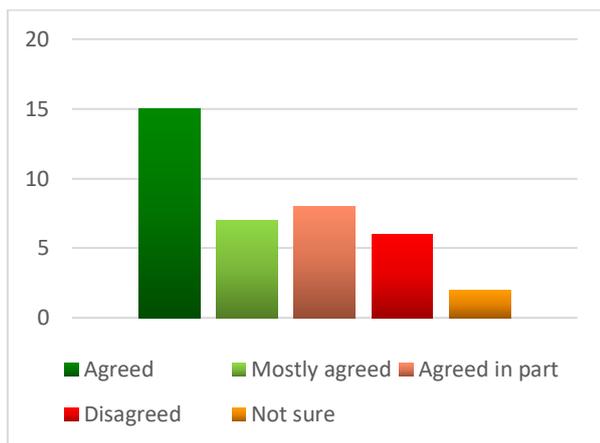
Other respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue:

- *QPS have the same powers as Child Safety, though often fail to act, they make reports rather than act. QPS could receive more training and awareness of child abuse and could actually do some of that work as it is. Regardless, Child Safety should have longer working hours to interact with working families and school kids in the morning, evening and on weekends*
- *After hours support is important. Maybe, review current processes and extend where necessary*
- *Surely the time of the officers will be more greatly used to be on call for the benefit of apprehending the criminals who are providing the drugs in the first place?*

Academics

Of the 38 academics who answered this question:

- 15 (39.47%) agreed with this proposal
- 7 (18.42%) mostly agreed
- 8 (21.05%) agreed only in part
- 6 (15.79%) disagreed, and
- 2 (5.26%) indicated that they were not sure



10 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support:

- 100%

Considerations

Some respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition; support and training of staff; and availability of other services to support the response:

- *For placement and accommodation issues*
- *Sure but not a 'force'. Nothing like police*
- *CSS need teams to respond in person to situations, these need to be trained and supported, funded for trained staff and first nations staff*
- *This could have merit. Families and children do need support after hours and to have a highly skilled and perhaps multi-disciplinary team tasked with after hours work could have some usefulness. However, the mechanisms already in place, with many good partnerships across sectors, do function well in a political context where funding does not meet the demand for services and while there is an ongoing shortage of safe out of home alternatives for children, this in and of itself is not a solution*

Further information

Two respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its operation and the evidence supporting it:

- *On standby is that the same as on call? If so then no, as staff can refuse to attend or come into work when on call. I've seen it so many times. However, if standby is night shift and they are at work, but work has sleeping quarters similar to ambos and firies then yes*
- *More details are required, along with a cost-benefit analysis. 24 hour availability is not a problem that has been raised in either of the last two public inquiries (the CMC inquiry and the Carmody Inquiry) so who says it is a problem, and what is the problem that this initiative is aiming to solve?*

Not necessary or not the issue

Two respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue:

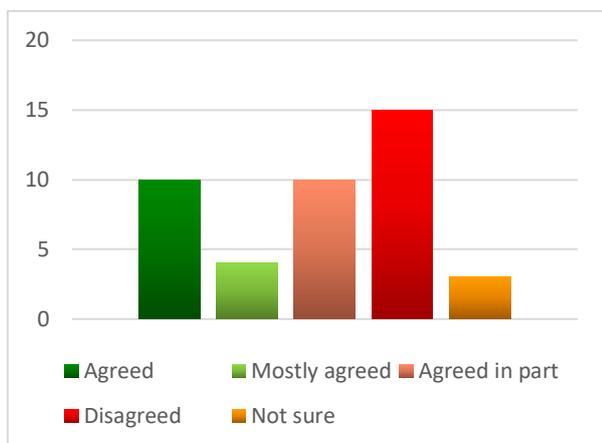
- *Already available, misleading narrative in the proposal context*
- *We currently have After Hours and police that do this - so I am not sure what this is about*

Private consultants and employees of consultancy or training organisations

Of the 41 private consultants and employees of consultancy or training organisations, who answered this question:

- 18 (43.90%) agreed with the proposal
- 10 (24.39%) mostly agreed
- 7 (17.07%) agreed only in part
- 5 (12.20%) disagreed, and
- 1 (2.44%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



14 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support:

- *Yes, after hours support is most definitely needed*

Considerations

Some respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; service model; support and training of staff; regional coverage; and funding:

- *If it is support. Most families need support in the middle of the night, not someone barging in and removing a kid*
- *In response to DFV and if the teams are well trained and versed to create safety for the families that are needing assistance after hours, this may be a positive approach*
- *After hours is often when incidents occur such as domestic violence etc. If trained staff as first responders could attend with police when there are known children present in the incident it could reduce the trauma often experienced by children when after hours removals occur with police force*
- *As long as it absolutely reacts when prompted*
- *A responsive well-funded team after hours will be assistive*

Further information

One respondent sought further information on the rationale for the proposal:

- *How is this different to what already exists after hours?*

Not necessary or not the issue

Some respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue:

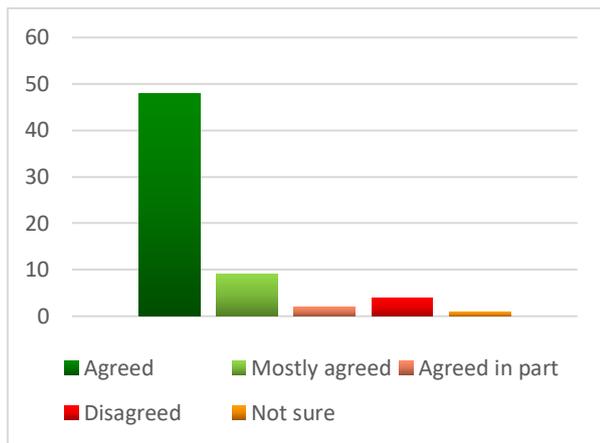
- *We already have a Child Safety After Hours service for this purpose. Government and non-government organisations already provide on-call support and service. This would be a waste of money*
- *The current system already has 24 hour, 5 day and 10 day response goals*
- *Well can we not look to expand the offering by Out of Hours. Maybe need to look at some books on the ground in regional areas. Also, for children in placements, Placement Support Agencies provide afterhours support*

Parents (and other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 64 parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 48 (75%) agreed with the proposal
- 9 (14.06%) mostly agreed
- 2 (3.13%) agreed only in part
- 4 (6.25%) disagreed, and
- 1 (1.56%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



13 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families:

- *Support is needed whenever crisis occurs*
- *Abuse of children doesn't just happen inside 9-5 work hours!*
- *The worst time is generally overnight. That's when more parents are home with their kids, that's when the alcohol and drugs are normally more of an issue*

Considerations

Some respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; working conditions; statewide

coverage; funding; and availability of other services to support the response:

- *Well depends what support it is cause police and child safety make it worse, they should not make things that hard to get NDIS disability support*
- *Rapid response should be 24/7*
- *Yes, but safety response measures essential. Talk to Chris Boyle. He leads a tech solution org that can help keep kids and workers safe. He was a social worker for 30 years prior to developing this solution because and he really knows his stuff. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chris-boyle-033a5853>*
- *There probably does need to be an after-hours support that is accessible. I am not sure how this would work across the whole of Queensland. Their role would need to be clearly defined and the staff would need to be appropriately trained*
- *I will add that I have taken a call from a parent in the middle of the night asking for help. If there are workers on 24/7 there should be paid parent support 24/7*

Not necessary or not the issue

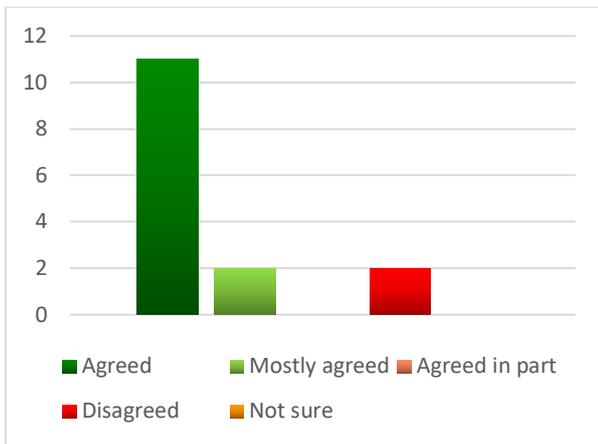
Two respondents disagreed with the proposal due to its connotations and potential impact on families:

- *This is absolutely appalling*
- *What if they are WRONG? Do they terrorise to suicide motherless children like (name removed)?*

Young people (under 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 15 young people (under 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 11 (73.33%) agreed with this proposal
- 2 (13.33%) mostly agreed
- 0 (0%) agreed only in part, and
- 2 (13.33%) disagreed



2 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

One respondent supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families:

- *There does need to be someone there 24/7 because issues with these children and their families do not stop just because it's not working hours*

Not necessary or not the issue

One respondent disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary:

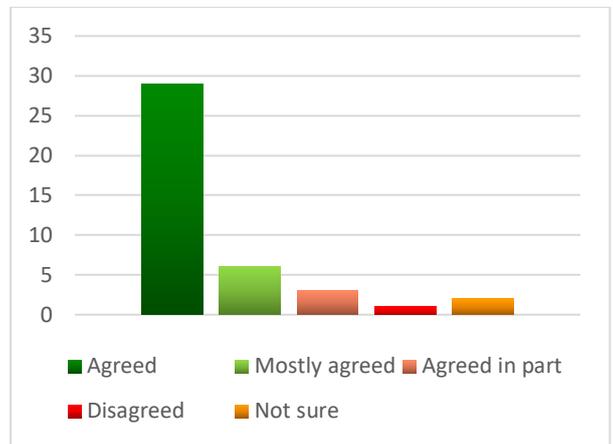
- *Is that not what the police should be doing? Supporting Child Safety when needed*

Older people (over 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 41 older people (over 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 29 (70.73%) agreed with this proposal
- 6 (14.63%) mostly agreed
- 3 (7.32%) agreed only in part
- 1 (2.44%) disagreed, and
- 2 (4.88%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



9 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Three respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families:

- *Child protection is 24/7! It's doesn't start at 9am and finish at 5pm*
- *Most issues happen for Carers during the night or weekend when staff are unavailable*

Rapid response and staff on hand 24 hours

One respondent however questioned the relationship between the proposals for a rapid response capacity and involving staff being on hand 24 hours, suggesting if you have one you do not need the other:

- *Yes, but just a team out of after hours*

Considerations

Three respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; and how it would operate:

- *As long as it's not just a removal of children team, you need to get the intake assessment down pat or give extra resources to the police. If the workforce representatives mirror the client demographics. Indigenous community organisations need to be funded to consider cultural aspects*

- Perhaps if this included a qualified and experienced social worker
- Would possibly save money, but it would mean a delay in action, as each member of the team would have to come into the office before proceeding to the location of the call out???

Not necessary or not the issue

Two respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary:

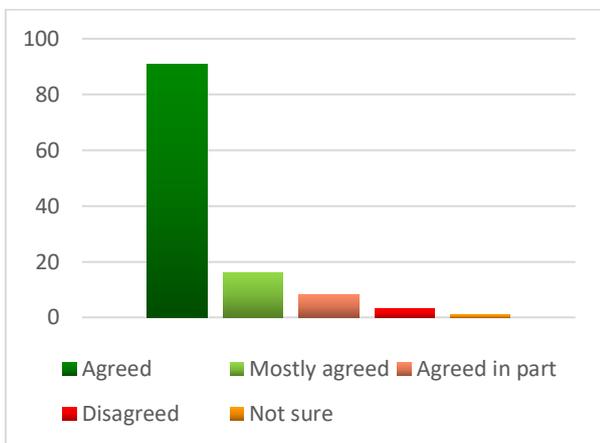
- There is already after hours response to emergency situations

Foster Carers

Of the 119 Foster Carers who answered this question:

- 91 (76.47%) agreed with this proposal
- 16 (13.45%) mostly agreed
- 8 (6.72%) agreed only in part
- 3 (2.52%) disagreed, and
- 1 (0.84%) indicated that they were not sure

Two respondents skipped this question.



17 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

Some respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby for after-hours support as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the support of carers:

- Ensuring that vulnerable children are protected and try to not scare them
- Yes because night time they're needed for emergency and children need to be taken out with as less trauma as possible
- Yes definitely in need. Someone needs to be appointed specifically to identify urgent intake of urgent issues brought up within the community
- I think children are often more at risk after hours when they are not at school/daycare etc or parents at work
- Waiting for hours to get through to on call is not acceptable and neither is leaving a message. they need to be able to be accessible then and there
- I am a carer and have been asked to go to hospitals in the middle of the night to get children that I have agreed to care for. This should not be the responsibility of a carer this should be done by a child protection worker

Considerations

Two respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including staff composition of the team and oversight of the use of powers:

- There should be child protection workers rostered on after hours. They can support the Police
- If you do this, you would also need an independent investigation team who can investigate those child safety workers who abuse their power as well. I guess it would mean more jobs for the state government

Further information

One respondent sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal:

- Respond to what exactly? Would this include support for kids already in care? Foster/kinship carers? Crisis situations? Investigations?

Not necessary or not the issue

Some respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue:

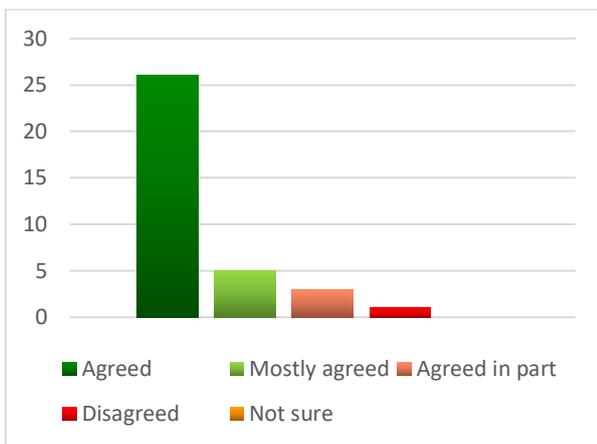
- Child safety already have an after hours

- *CSYW already has an afterhours service, expanding this would be feasible*
- *This would not be the best use of resources - resources mostly needed to increase the number of CSOs and reduce their case load*
- *I see potential high cost in paying people to be on call, with potentially very little gain. The funding could perhaps be put to better use*

Kinship Carers

Of the 35 Kinship Carers who answered this question:

- 26 (74.29%) agreed with the proposal
- 5 (14.29%) mostly agreed
- 3 (8.57%) agreed only in part, and
- 1 (2.86%) disagreed



6 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

After hours support

One respondent supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *There should also be provision for an officer to take action when there is reason to believe that a child is in danger - the present child care system seems to rely on acting after an incident has occurred rather than trying to prevent it from happening*

Considerations

One respondent identified staff composition as a consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal:

- *Yes but only if they're trained child safety officers. We need after hours staff to assist with emergencies and people who can be supportive*

Further information

One respondent sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal:

- *It is hard to agree or not with this as there is so little information on what actually this would look like ...would it be team of people in each region or town or only in the suburban areas? Would the After hours service the department currently has be expanded to provide a more comprehensive face to face service?*

Not necessary or not the issue

Two respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by for after-hours support suggesting it was not necessary:

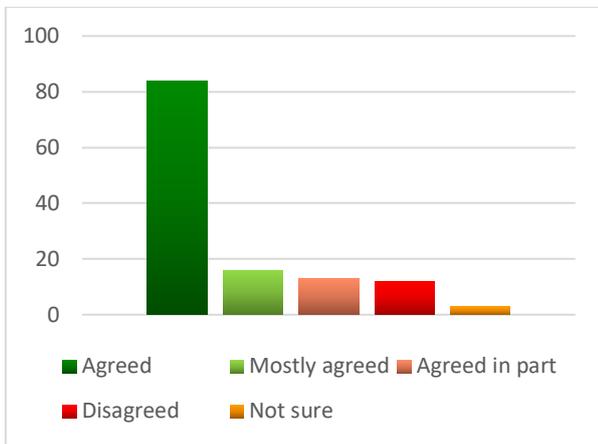
- *After hours phone call would be enough*
- *Don't we already have this? Couldn't we direct funds to services already in place, like the CPIU?*

Others

Of the 128 survey respondents who indicated that they did not belong to one of the aforementioned groups or who identified with multiple groups, and who answered this question:

- 84 (65.63%) agreed with the proposal
- 16 (12.50%) mostly agreed
- 13 (10.16%) agreed only in part
- 12 (9.38%) disagreed, and
- 3 (2.34%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question



36 of respondent within this stakeholder group provided comments.

After hours support

Most respondents supported the need for a rapid response team to be placed on standby as it would improve access, timeliness and responsiveness to the needs of children and families; and it would improve the existing responses:

- *It can be justified in cases where a child is in acute danger, but principally to diffuse a situation and to help create some stability*
- *Model already working at IFYS Foster Care Sunshine Coast*
- *Child safety after hours support system is a goddam joke. We need 24/7 access to help. Our nominated Child Safety Officer rarely responds to our calls or emails*
- *As an operator of an OSHC, it's very frustrating to have to wait hours to report a concern. Hours and minutes can make a big difference*

Rapid response and staff on hand 24 hours

Some respondents however questioned the relationship between the proposals for a rapid response capacity and involving staff being on hand 24 hours, suggesting if you have one you do not need the other:

- *Child safety officers should be rostered on rotational shifts and working with the QPS. A rapid response team would then not be required*

Considerations

Some respondents identified areas for consideration in clarifying, refining and implementing the proposal including its purpose and function; staff composition of the team; working conditions; support and training of staff; statewide coverage; and funding:

- *The Rapid Response Team must consist of people whose rosters have been carefully organised to ensure that the responders are in top form when they arrive at the emergency*
- *Absolutely. The funds that are allocated to ongoing programs that continue to demonstrate low statistical results, should be allocated to creating new strategies to minimise risk and provide better ongoing support access*
- *If it is appropriately staffed, that is there are experienced workers in the areas of drug and alcohol, mental health and disability*
- *Child Safety Officers, if removing children will also need to be removing them in the middle of the night, having no safety support like QPS do with their tasers, spray and guns. Think about safety*
- *With the right skills (DV trained + multi-disciplinary team) as well as resourcing to get families to safety if the circumstances require. Or selecting staff willing to 'work past 5' if they feel that they can qualify risk - would also need an authorising environment not driven by budgets but by need*
- *There needs to be a rapid response in each region/area*

Further information

Three respondents sought further information about the nature and scope of the proposal including its purpose and function; how it would be different from current arrangements; and funding:

- *What would their responsibility be?*
- *There is already a Child Safety After Hours service. I am unclear through this suggestion of what substantial change the LNP is proposing*
- *Where is the money coming from?*

Not necessary or not the issue

Some respondents disagreed with the proposal to have a rapid response team on stand by, suggesting it was not necessary or not the issue:

- *This already exists, it is called Child Safety After Hours. Provide more funding to this so that these CSO's can actually attend to emergency issues*
 - *If the concern that is reported is that high of a concern QPS should be responding after hours, then hand over to Child Safety*
 - *Not workable, resources would be better placed with the regional QPS-CPIU teams*
- *Criminal offences need a rapid response and for that we already have the police. We don't need another military type force to respond to child safety, we need comprehensive support that is provided to families early and ongoing*
 - *It would be more economical and safer to have more Child Safety Officers and caseloads of 15 and below as recommended by the last two departmental reviews*

