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14 JAN 2020



Office of the
Commissioner

**Queensland Fire and
Emergency Services**

Mr John Robertson
Chair
Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council

Dear Mr Robertson

Thank you for your letter dated 6 December 2019 inviting preliminary feedback on key issues to be explored by the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council (the Council) in reviewing penalties for assaults on police and other frontline emergency service workers, corrective service officers and other public officers.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) takes all instances of violence against its employees seriously. Fortunately, assaults on QFES frontline workers are not a common occurrence. Incidents are reported on the QFES incident reporting system, regardless of whether an injury is sustained or not, and individuals are also supported to contact the Queensland Police Service where appropriate.

While incidences have been low, the potential for assaults against emergency service workers remains. QFES would therefore like to ensure the review of the definition of 'public officer' makes clear its application to all frontline QFES employees and volunteers. QFES would be pleased to provide further details as to the complexities within the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* in relation to categorisation of QFES staff and employees.

To assist with Council's data collection, please find attached QFES' records of occupational violence from 2008-2019. During this time period, there have been 51 instances of assault against firefighters, volunteer firefighters and SES volunteers.

Please note that the information provided in the 'Summary' tab of the attached spreadsheet may be referenced or published, however the information in the 'Relevant assault data' tab of the spreadsheet is confidential and not for publication.

Due to confidentiality provisions, QFES is unable to provide details of individuals for data matching purposes. It should also be noted that departmental records do not include the result of any police action, court, or compensation outcomes.

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QFES wishes to nominate Ms Samantha Thompson, Director, Strategic Policy and Legislation as the key point of contact. Should you require any further assistance, please contact Ms Thompson on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Greg Leach
Commissioner

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