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## Media release

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and  
Minister for Training and Skills  
The Honourable Yvette D'Ath

### **Court programs to address crime reinstated**

The reinstatement of a number of successful court programs is a feature of the Government's boost to spending on the justice system in the 2015-16 State Budget.

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Yvette D'Ath said the Government had allocated \$32.3 million over the next four years to reinstate court diversionary processes.

This includes \$8.7 million to honour its election commitment to reinstate courts such as the Murri Court and Special Circumstances Court Diversion program.

"The re-establishment of these specialist courts will help address the underlying causes of offending and divert offenders from prison by providing them with opportunities to address their offending behaviour, helping to turn their lives around and create a safer community," Mrs D'Ath said.

"Funding of \$23.6 million will allow for the reinstatement of court-based referrals to Youth Justice Conferencing, providing an opportunity for young people to take responsibility for their criminal behaviour and its effect on victims."

Mrs D'Ath added the diversionary processes would be fully evaluated over the four-year funding period.

"The Government is also committed to informing and educating the public about the role of the courts and the justice system, so we have allocated \$5.5 million over three years to reinstate the Sentencing Advisory Council," she said.

"The Sentencing Advisory Council will play an important role in explaining sentencing, collating statistical information about sentencing, and researching the effectiveness of sentencing practices in reducing crime."

Mrs D'Ath said the Government was determined to address the issue of domestic and family violence, spending more than \$4 million across a number of justice initiatives as part of a total package of \$31.3 million over four years in response to the Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce Report.

"The Government has provided additional funding of \$3 million over four years from 2015-16, including \$2.1 million to establish an independent Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Board, and expand the Domestic and Family Violence Review Unit," she said.

"We will also provide funding of \$1.1 million in the next financial year to expand the Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Service across the State through Legal Aid Queensland.

"This service will empower victims to pursue matters, smooth court processes, and improve victim safety and compliance with court orders."

Mrs D'Ath said the Government's determination to protect the community was reflected in funding of \$9.6 million over three years to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence in and around licensed premises, particularly key entertainment precincts.

"The funding will allow for the continuation of expanded compliance and enforcement activities, providing for more inspections of licensed premises, particularly during peak trading periods, in addition to enhanced overt and covert compliance and enforcement activities," the Attorney-General said.

She said the Government aimed to reduce alcohol-fuelled violence by introducing a statewide 1am lockout and 3am cessation of alcohol service, banning the sale of high-alcohol content drinks after midnight, and prohibiting repeat offenders from entering licensed premises.

Drink Safe Precincts, which were introduced as a trial by the Labor Government in 2010, will continue in Fortitude Valley, Surfers Paradise and Townsville, and we will build on our strong record to provide safe communities for Queensland.

In line with its election commitment, the Government is providing funding of \$1 million over five years for the two Environmental Defenders Offices, and returning them to the list of community organisations eligible for legal assistance service delivery funding.

The Environmental Defenders Office offers free legal advice and acts for individuals, community groups and conservation groups seeking to protect the environment in the public interest.

Mrs D'Ath said another important priority was the allocation of \$6 million to conduct the Commission of Inquiry into Organised Crime in Queensland.

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