



Annual report

2024–2025

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Queensland Law Reform Commission

Annual Report

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08 August 2025



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The Honourable Deb Frecklington MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and
Minister for Integrity

In accordance with section 15 of the Law Reform Commission Act 1968, the Queensland Law Reform Commission is pleased to present its Annual Report 2024–25.

The members of the Commission look forward to continuing the Commission’s important contribution to law reform in Queensland.

Fleur Kingham

Chair

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Chair's Foreword

On behalf of the Queensland Law Reform Commission, I present the Annual Report for 2024–25.

The Commission is an independent statutory agency for law reform, respected by government and the community as a centre of excellence. It undertakes law reform reviews of matters referred to it by the Attorney-General. I take this opportunity to thank the Attorney-General and the Department of Justice for their support of our work.

Our current referrals will conclude in 2025–26. In consultation with the judiciary, legal profession and the community, the Commission has developed a proposed future law reform program for the five-year period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2030. This will be submitted to the Attorney-General in the first half of 2025–26.

In this reporting period, the Commission progressed three reviews.

The Attorney-General withdrew the reference for the review of mining lease objections on 4 March 2025. I respect this is a matter for the Attorney-General. I thank the many individuals, communities and professional associations who shared their experiences, perspectives, expertise, and ideas with us in meetings, workshops and submissions. Our review publications, available on our website, [www.qlrc.qld.gov.au](http://www qlrc qld gov au), demonstrate the value of our constructive and collaborative discussions about this important and complex process.

For the two other reviews, the review of particular criminal defences, and the review of the non-fatal strangulation offence, we have been busy with research, consultations and publishing background papers, research reports, consultation papers and supporting documents.

Consultation lies at the heart of our work. Across the three reviews we have undertaken 455 consultations in 41 locations. What we learn in consultations supplements the formal submissions to our consultation papers. For the mining and criminal defences reviews, we published background papers which summarise and analyse the views expressed during consultations and in submissions. For the third review, that information will be published with the final report.

Capturing and analysing the full range of opinions about our key issues is critical to the final stage of any review, developing recommendations and drafting final reports. That will be our focus in 2025–26 when our final reports for our two current reviews are due. We are well placed to meet our reporting deadlines.

In 2024–25 we intensified our engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to harness their knowledge and expertise. Ms Avelina Tarrago was appointed to the Commission on 1 July 2024. She is a Wangkamahdla woman and barrister and brings a First Nations person's perspective to the work of the Commission. Ms Tarrago is also the inaugural Chair of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Reference Group, established in the reporting period. This was a key action in our Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander



Fleur Kingham

peoples Strategic Plan, developed and published in 2024–25. I thank the members of that group who are volunteers and provide wise counsel.

I am proud to report the Commission ably met the challenge of progressing three significant reviews simultaneously. This was only possible because of the respective contributions of Commissioners and Secretariat staff.

The Commissioners responded positively and flexibly to additional calls on their time and requests to involve themselves in new ways. This included leading consultation meetings and presenting at review launch events or roundtables. As well as sharing their experience and expertise in Commission deliberations, all Commissioners have actively promoted broader and deeper engagement with our reviews through professional and community networks.

Our Deputy Chair, Judge Rafter, has devoted time out of court to lead the criminal defences review. Chief Judge Deveraux, himself a former Commissioner, has been generous in facilitating that. I formally record my sincere appreciation for this significant support.

I commend the work of all members of the Secretariat, the engine room of the Commission. Our Executive Director, Matt Corrigan, skilfully led a flexible and accomplished team assisted by the review leaders, Dr Emma Philips, Jodie O’Leary and Kellie Jones. My thanks to the administrative staff who maintain equanimity while ensuring all works seamlessly. Our researchers demonstrate rigour in legal research and respect in consultations, enhancing our reputation for excellence. They also mentor a growing band of enthusiastic interns experiencing law reform in action.

The Commission produced more publications in 2024–25 than in any year. The professionalism and accessibility of the publications are self-evident and a team effort. However, I must single out our Principal Communications and Publications Officer, Julia Starkey, who has shouldered an enormous load and transformed our communications performance.

I look forward to delivering our two final reports and recommendations to the Attorney-General and receiving further reviews in 2025–26. The Commission continues to be well placed to achieve its purpose of a fair, modern and simple legal framework for the benefit of the Queensland community.

Message from the Executive Director

I acknowledge the work of everyone in the Secretariat who assist the Commission in achieving its purpose of a fair, modern and simple legal framework with practical, innovative and just law reform recommendations. I am extremely grateful to work with such talented, generous and collaborative people. In 2024–25, that work spanned three law reform reviews which reflected the breadth and depth of their talent.

At the end of 2024–25, the Secretariat consisted of 12 permanent staff. We may also engage subject matter experts and other staff to work on our reviews on a temporary basis. At the end of 2024–25, there were 10 staff employed on a temporary basis. I am committed to the Secretariat being an attractive place for the best policy lawyers in Queensland to work, with opportunities for challenge and growth.



Matthew Corrigan

Effective law reform is underpinned by community engagement and consultation with diverse people and groups. Over the reporting period, we held events, meetings, forums, and roundtables with hundreds of stakeholders throughout Queensland. We also engaged researchers from the Australian National University to conduct a state-wide community attitudes survey and focus group examining defences and sentences in cases of homicide and assault in Queensland. This research provides unique insight into the negative attitudes of Queenslanders to domestic and family violence and increasing concern about those who resort to violence when provoked.

We have travelled across Queensland to communities large and small, and to First Nations communities, including in the Torres Strait. We also heard from stakeholders with lived experience of the matters being considered by our reviews. I thank all those who engaged with us for so generously sharing their time, perspectives, knowledge and ideas, which have shaped our thinking and approach to reform of the areas of law under review.

In the reporting period, I am pleased that we established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Reference Group under the leadership of our Commission member Ms Avelina Tarrago. This is an important step in bolstering the contribution of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the highest level of our organisation. It confirms our approach to law reform is based on dialogue and partnership.

I thank our Chair, Fleur Kingham, for her support and exceptional strategic leadership. I acknowledge the outstanding contribution of each of our Commission members.

Our Strategic plan



Strategic plan



Purpose

A fair, modern and simple legal framework



Output

Practical, innovative and just law reform recommendations



Values

Transparency, rigour, impartiality, inclusivity, collaboration



Objectives

To build a reputation as a centre of excellence for:

- legal research
- community consultation
- independent advice

To provide law reform recommendations supported by high quality, authoritative and timely reports

To encourage and support people across Queensland to engage in law reform, including diverse and disadvantaged communities

To effectively liaise on law reform:

- across government
- between Australian law reform commissions

Year in review

Role and functions of the Commission

The Commission undertakes research and provides recommendations to reform the law on topics selected by the Attorney-General.

The Commission is an independent statutory body constituted under the Law Reform Commission Act 1968.

Our purpose and values

The Commission aims to meet the needs of the Queensland community by reviewing areas of the law referred to us by the Attorney-General and by making recommendations for reform. In accordance with our strategic plan, the Commission has the purpose of achieving a fair, modern and simple legal framework, by providing practical, innovative and just law reform recommendations based on the values of transparency, rigour, impartiality, inclusivity, and collaboration. Recommendations are published in our final reports and presented to the Attorney-General for tabling in Parliament in accordance with the requirements of section 16 of the Law Reform Commission Act 1968.

Engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The Commission recognises the knowledge and expertise of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, maintained throughout generations, as the world's oldest continuing living culture. To have this knowledge and expertise inform our work, we are committed to genuine, respectful, appropriate and culturally safe engagement.

During the reporting period, the Commission developed and published an Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples Strategic Plan to guide effective consultation and engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. This Strategic Plan has three stated objectives related to cultural capability, engagement and accountability, and transparency. It sets out a number of activities related to these objectives for us to complete within its two-year period. These include the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Reference Group to work with us to enhance our engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities to achieve our purpose of a fair, modern and simple legal framework. Other activities within this Strategic Plan relate to developing our material in ways that may be more accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, as well as inviting Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to attend and participate in our events.

Communication and Engagement

Effective communication and engagement are vital to ensuring Queenslanders can access, understand, and contribute to law reform. By making the Commission's work clear and accessible, we empower individuals and communities to have their voices heard, fostering a fair and inclusive legal framework.

This section highlights how the Commission's communication efforts have connected with diverse audiences through multiple channels, encouraged participation, and strengthened collaboration across sectors. Through these activities, the Commission continues to build trust and transparency, ensuring its work reflects the needs and values of the community.

Consultations

The Commission is dedicated to engaging with Queenslanders from all corners of the state. The map below illustrates the extensive reach of the Commission's consultations during 2024–25 in Queensland and other locations in Australia.



Website

The Commission's website is integral to its work, serving as a central hub for sharing information, publishing consultation materials and ensuring Queenslanders can easily access and engage with the law reform process.

During 2024–25, several enhancements and updates were made to the Commission's website, [www.qlrc.qld.gov.au](http://www qlrc qld gov au). These include an online submission portal, the publication of more than 30 papers and supporting documents, the launch of the non-fatal strangulation review webpages, and a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander page: Building trust, crafting connections.

Over the 2024–25 period, there were 22,722 users, a 30% increase on the previous year. Of these users there were 83,668 webpage views, resulting in a 47.6% increase. Behind the QLRC homepage, the most viewed page was the review of particular criminal defences.

Publications

Across the three reviews, the Commission released 15 papers (background papers, research reports and consultation papers) and 17 supporting documents. There were three documents released to promote the Commissions' commitment to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The publications were published on the Commission's website and promoted via eNewsletters, LinkedIn posts, webinars, events and consultation sessions.

The following images portray the scope of publications released during 2024–25.

The mining lease objections review released one background paper, three consultation papers and fact sheets, and four summary papers aimed at our Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.



The review of particular criminal defences released three background papers, one consultation paper and six supporting documents.



The non-fatal strangulation review released one background paper, two research reports, one consultation paper and three supporting fact sheets.



The Commission also released three documents that support our commitment and engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.



eNewsletters

The Commission sends formal communications via eNewsletters. During 2024–25 there were 26 eNewsletters sent to subscribers. This equated to 16,639 total sends.

Out of this number there were:

- 10,896 total opens, equating to a 65.48% open rate
- 2861 clicks, resulting in a 26.25% click through rate.

The eNewsletter subscriber list achieved considerable growth during 2024–25. In the previous financial year there were 751 subscribers. In 2024–25 the subscriber list grew to 1640, resulting in an 118.38% increase.

These eNewsletters are also published on the Commission’s website.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn remains a key communication channel for the Commission, providing an effective platform to engage with legal professionals and other stakeholders. Over the course of 2024–25, the Commission published more than 75 posts, with its LinkedIn following nearly doubling—from over 800 followers at the start of the year to almost 1,600 by year’s end—a testament to the quality and relevance of its content. The top-performing post for the year was the announcement welcoming new Commission member Avelina Tarrago.

Videos

Throughout 2024–25 the Commission produced a series of videos highlighting key themes from its work, including insights into major proposals and consultation questions, key findings from submission analyses, and a powerful video featuring non-fatal strangulation victim-survivors sharing their experiences with the criminal justice system.

Videos are a vital communication tool, enabling the Commission to present complex issues in an accessible and engaging way and reach diverse audiences effectively. These videos can be viewed on the Commission’s YouTube channel.

Conferences

During 2024–25, the Commission’s members and Secretariat participated in various conferences and seminars to showcase QLRC’s reviews, raise the Commission’s profile, and promote education and awareness of the law reform process.

Speaker / representative	Conference / event
Edward Fleetwood, QLRC Senior Legal Officer	Central Queensland Law Association Conference, Rockhampton (September 2024)
QLRC exhibitor, Commissioner Avelina Tarrago in attendance	Gulf Connect 2024 economic development forum, Burketown (September 2024)

Commissioner, Glen Cranny QLRC exhibitor	Queensland Law Society Symposium (February 2025)
Chair, Fleur Kingham and Deputy Chair Judge Rafter	Bar Association Conference (February 2025)
Chair, Fleur Kingham	Commonwealth Law Reform Agencies Conference in Malta (April 2025)
QLRC exhibitor	Community Legal Centres Queensland Conference (June 2025)

Webinars and Roundtables

During the consultation period for each review, the Commission hosted a series of webinars and roundtables to encourage engagement and discussion. These events formed an important part of the consultation process to gather insights and sentiments to inform each review.

Review / theme	Webinar / Roundtable
Mining lease objections review	Dalby Information Session – webinar
	Emerald Information Session – webinar
	Mount Isa Information Session – webinar
	Legal professionals Roundtable
Review of particular criminal defences	Community Attitudes to Defences in Cases of Homicide and Assault in Queensland – survey findings webinar, facilitated by Deputy Chair Judge Anthony Rafter
	Academic Roundtable
	Legal professionals Roundtable
Criminal defences reviews combined	Domestic, Sexual and Family Violence Stakeholders Roundtable
Non-fatal strangulation review	Non-fatal strangulation review launch event – webinar
	Chaired by Commission Chair, Fleur Kingham. Panellists: Professor Heather Douglas AM, Dr Leah Sharman, Thelma Schwartz and Glen Cranny.
	Academic Roundtable

	Health professionals Roundtable
	Legal professionals Roundtable
Law reform	Law Reform Masterclass – hosted by the Commission for law reform agencies in Australia and overseas

Citations

Throughout 2024–25, the Commission’s work continued to shape academic, public and media conversations, reinforcing its ongoing impact on legal scholarship, public debate and education.

Commission publications were widely referenced in discussions on Queensland law reform, including key areas such as sexual consent laws, voluntary assisted dying and the decriminalisation of sex work. This includes 15 academic articles and papers, four formal submissions to enquiries, 21 Queensland Government publications and 32 media items. These references highlight the value of the Commission’s research in supporting legal debate and policy development.

The Commission’s presence in scholarly and public forums also contributes to legal education, helping students and researchers engage with current legal issues through the lens of reform. By informing journal articles, law reviews and student research, the Commission’s work supports a deeper understanding of Queensland’s legal system and the role of independent law reform in shaping it.

University affiliation

The Commission continued its collaboration with the University of Queensland, Griffith University, and Bond University during 2024–25, providing valuable opportunities for law students to engage with the law reform process.

Students from the University of Queensland’s Pro Bono Centre contributed to the Commission’s reviews by researching and presenting case law studies, gaining practical research experience while deepening their understanding of law reform. Students also had the experience of presenting their research to the Commission’s review teams and Chair, Fleur Kingham.

The Commission’s partnerships with UQ, Griffith and Bond also included hosting interns, further supporting students in developing their skills and knowledge through hands-on involvement in legal research and report writing. These collaborations reflect the Commission’s commitment to fostering the next generation of legal professionals while advancing its work on law reform. We thank the Universities for supporting these collaborations and the students for their time, energy and dedication.

Law reform reviews in 2024–25

In 2024–25, the Commission progressed three law reform reviews:

- a review of mining lease objections
- a review of particular criminal defences
- a review of the non-fatal strangulation offence.

The review of mining lease objections concluded on 4 March 2025 when the reference was withdrawn by the Attorney-General. The review of particular criminal defences and the review of the non-fatal strangulation offence will both conclude in the first half of 2025–26. A review of Queensland’s laws relating to workplace surveillance, referred on 24 July 2018, is currently on hold. A review of the criminalisation of serious disease transmission, referred on 25 September 2024 and due to commence on 1 July 2025, is also on hold. There will be no ongoing work on these two reviews while they are on hold. Summaries of the reviews that were progressed during 2024–25 are provided below.

Review of the mining lease objections process



Referred	5 April 2023
Due Date	30 June 2025
Delivered	N/A – Reference withdrawn 4 March 2025
Tabled in Parliament	N/A
Consultations	152
Review papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Background papers • 3 Consultation papers and 9 supporting documents • 19 Working papers
Events	1 Launch event
Submissions received	54

On 5 April 2023, the Commission received terms of reference for a review of mining lease objections processes commencing on 5 June 2023, with the final report and recommendations due by 30 June 2025.

The public and private interests in mining projects include ensuring ongoing investment and sustainable growth in resource projects and protecting the environment, cultural heritage, community, agricultural and landowner interests. The mining lease objections processes are one way those interests are taken into account in making decisions about mining projects.

We were asked to review and make recommendations about the processes to decide contested applications for mining leases in Queensland under the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and associated environmental authorities under the Environmental Protection Act 1994, including review of such decisions.

We were also asked to consider:

- whether any changes we recommend should apply to applications for resource production tenures under the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004

- how any changes we recommend will interact with decisions made under a range of other Queensland Government and Australian Government Acts
- the implications of other Acts, including the Human Rights Act 2019 and Judicial Review Act 1991.

On 4 March 2025, the Attorney-General withdrew the reference for the review under section 10 of the Law Reform Commission Act 1968. This meant the review was terminated, along with the requirement for the Commission to make a final report and recommendations. The Attorney-General said the establishment of the Crisafulli Government's Resources Cabinet Committee meant the review was no longer required. The Resources Cabinet Committee will consider policies and initiatives to maintain and improve the competitiveness of Queensland's resources sector and the value of its supply chain, including progressing solutions to reduce delays and improve approval time frames.

The Commission had been progressing the review during 2024–25, releasing a series of publications:

- Consultation paper: Reimagining decision-making processes for Queensland mining (July 2024)
- Consultation paper: Valuing the perspectives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples (July 2024)
- Consultation paper – Conscious consistency: mining and other resource production tenures (November 2024)
- Background paper 4: Your thoughts on a reimagined process (November 2024)
- a suite of supporting documents, including two fact sheets and four summary papers (July–November 2024).

Our Consultation paper: Reimagining decision-making processes for Queensland mining discussed and invited feedback on six reform proposals and asked 26 questions. We received 39 submissions in response. Our final Consultation paper – Conscious consistency: mining and other resource production tenures discussed and asked for feedback on whether any recommended changes to mining lease processes should apply for other resource production tenures, including their associated environmental authorities. We received 15 submissions in response. All submissions are published on our website, subject to our Submissions Policy.

Prior to withdrawal of the review, the Commission was well advanced in developing its recommendations to reform a complex and dated process. To facilitate the work of the Resources Cabinet Committee and to make good use of the public resources devoted to the review, we gave the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines a folder of working papers. The papers reflect the valuable contributions made by those who engaged with the review and the Commission's deep research and considered analysis in fulfilling the review's terms of reference.

The working papers are published on our website and include:

- a draft outline for the final report

- a running list of draft recommendations
- memorandums and briefing notes to Commissioners
- options papers
- fact sheets.

Review of particular criminal defences



Referred	15 November 2023
Due Date	1 December 2025
Delivered	N/A
Tabled in Parliament	N/A
Consultations	145
Review Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 Background papers and 4 supporting documents• 3 Research reports and 2 supporting documents• 1 Consultation paper and 3 supporting documents
Events	1 Launch event
Submissions received	44

The Commission made significant progress on this review in 2024–25.

Terms of reference

We received terms of reference for a review of particular criminal defences and excuses commencing on 15 November 2023. The final report, including any draft legislative provisions, is due by 1 December 2025.

We have been asked to review and make recommendations about the following aspects of the criminal law:

- self-defence in sections 271 and 272 of the Criminal Code
- provocation as a partial defence to murder in section 304 of the Criminal Code
- the partial defence to murder of killing for preservation in an abusive domestic relationship in section 304B of the Criminal Code
- provocation as a defence to assault in sections 268 and 269 of the Criminal Code
- the defence of domestic discipline in section 280 of the Criminal Code
- practice or procedure for these defences

- the mandatory penalty of life imprisonment for the offence of murder in section 305 of the Criminal Code.

Consultation and engagement

During 2024–25, we have consulted broadly, obtaining feedback from 623 stakeholders in 145 meetings, forums, and roundtables throughout metropolitan, regional and remote areas of Queensland. We conducted 32 semi-structured interviews with legal professionals (Supreme Court Judges, District Court Judges, Magistrates, Defence Counsel, and Crown Prosecutors) to gain insight into their perspectives and experiences. In collaboration with the Queensland Family and Child Commission, we held a focus group with nine youth advocates and young people aged 14 to 17 years to hear their experiences, perspectives and opinions about the defence of domestic discipline.

Consultation paper

In February 2025, we published our Consultation paper – Equality and integrity: Reforming criminal defences in Queensland. It discusses and invites feedback on seven reform proposals and asks 21 questions about potential reforms. Our reform proposals include:

- reformulation of self-defence to reduce complexity and make it better apply in the context of DFV
- repeal of the partial defences of killing for preservation in an abusive domestic relationship and killing on provocation
- amending the defence of assault provocation and the defence of prevention of repetition of insult so that they do not apply to domestic violence offences.

For the defence of domestic discipline, the consultation paper explores two options:

- repealing the defence, coupled with a diversionary scheme and community education and awareness campaign
- amending the defence to limit its scope and provide clarity.

We also ask about two new potential partial defences to murder:

- a trauma-based defence that applies when a victim-survivor of DFV kills their abuser
- excessive self-defence.

We also ask about practice and procedure reforms to:

- improve access to defences for vulnerable groups
- facilitate the admission of evidence about the nature and impact of DFV on victim-survivors who offend
- improve access to justice for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

The consultation paper also examines the mandatory penalty of life imprisonment for murder and the minimum non-parole period and seeks feedback on various reform options.

Following release of the consultation paper, the Commission engaged in wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders throughout Queensland. We received 44 submissions in response to the consultation paper.

Other publications

In July 2024, we published Background paper 2: Our guiding principles for reform. The paper identified five principles to guide our consideration of the issues in the review and help us develop recommendations for reform.

In November 2024, we published Research report 1: Community attitudes to defences and sentences in cases of homicide and assault in Queensland. This independent study, conducted by leading academics from the Australian National University, surveyed 2,500 Queenslanders and held focus groups with 58 members of the Queensland community. The study includes 12 key findings about community attitudes to domestic and family violence (DFV), provocation, self-defence, domestic discipline, the need for a partial defence to murder of excessive self-defence, and the mandatory penalty of life imprisonment for murder.

In February 2025, alongside our consultation paper, we published Background paper 3: Understanding domestic and family violence and its role in criminal defences. The terms of reference for the review require us to consider how the defences are operating in the context of DFV. The background paper explores the nature and impact of DFV, community attitudes to DFV, how the legal system responds to DFV, and the relevance of a history of DFV in assessing the availability of particular criminal defences.

In June 2025, the Commission published two further research reports. Research report 2 (Mandatory penalty for murder: Key research insights) presented the findings of our research on the mandatory penalty of life imprisonment for murder. The research involved analysis of sentencing remarks and Queensland Corrective Services data. The report made four key findings:

- sentences for murder do not reflect the offending context, including the degree of culpability or surrounding circumstances
- the judicial discretion to extend the minimum non-parole period is rarely exercised
- as the minimum non-parole period increases, the gap between the non-parole period and the release date reduces
- persons found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment rarely reoffend following release on parole and almost never reoffend by committing another murder.

Research report 3 (Domestic discipline defence: Key insights into police practices), examines whether, and if so how, the defence of domestic discipline influences police decision-making about whether to charge a parent, or person in place of a parent, in matters involving the use of force against a child. The research involved analysis of Queensland Police Service (QPS) data and interviews with Child Protection Investigation Unit officers. The report made four key findings:

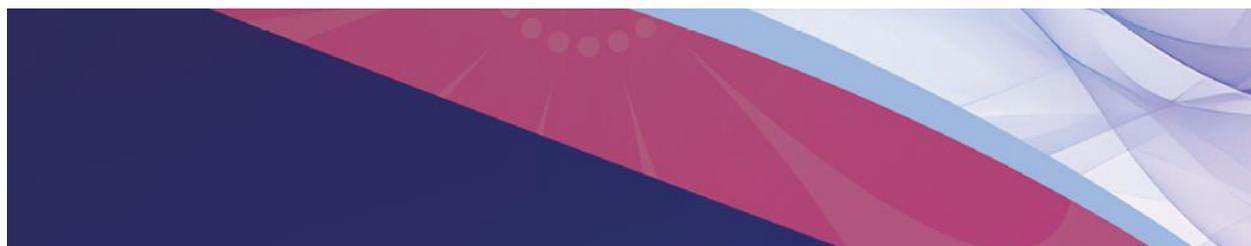
- the defence of domestic discipline is relied on by QPS officers when deciding not to charge a parent for allegedly physically harming a child

- when deciding not to charge a person based on the defence, QPS officers seek to justify their decision and senior officers provide oversight
- QPS officers apply the defence in a range of circumstances and do so inconsistently. In considering and applying the defence, officers consider the elements of the defence and broader public interest factors
- the availability of the defence enables Child Protection and Investigation Unit officers to not charge a parent and also to consider diversionary options as an alternative.

Further work in 2025–26

The Commission will continue its work to develop the final report and recommendations to give to the Attorney-General by 1 December 2025. As part of this process, we will engage in targeted consultations with stakeholders to obtain their perspectives as we refine reform proposals and progress our understanding of key issues.

Review of the non-fatal strangulation offence



Referred	5 September 2024
Due Date	30 September 2025
Delivered	N/A
Tabled in Parliament	N/A
Consultations	158
Review Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Background paper and 5 supporting documents• 2 Research reports• 1 Consultation paper and 2 supporting documents
Events	1 Launch event
Submissions received	26

Terms of reference

The Commission received terms of reference for a review of the offence of choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting in section 315A of the Criminal Code on 5 September 2024. The final report, including any information required to give effect to its recommendations, is due by 30 September 2025.

We have been asked to examine the scope, structure and interpretation of the strangulation offence, as well as any applicable procedural rules and practices.

Launch event

In November 2024, the review was launched with a webinar, chaired by the Commission Chair, in partnership with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It featured a video of a conversation between Betty Taylor AM, Co-Chair, Red Rose Foundation, and women with lived experience of non-fatal strangulation. There was also an interactive panel discussion with leading experts, including Professor Heather Douglas AM, Dr Leah Sharman, Thelma Schwartz, and Commission member Glen Cranny.

Publications

To coincide with the launch event, we published Background paper 1: Our terms of reference. It explains the review process, guiding principles for the review, the current law, the background to the review, and explores the five key issues of the review.

In April 2025 we published Research report 1 – ‘I just want to be heard’: The voices of strangulation victim-survivors. We interviewed nine victim-survivors and received 24 responses to a survey of victim-survivors to hear about their lived experiences of the criminal justice system following strangulation and their views on what could be done to improve system responses. The research was conducted with the generous assistance of the Red Rose Foundation, who recruited most of the victim-survivors that participated in the research and liaised with and provided support to them. We identified five key themes from our research:

- most victim-survivors had negative experiences with police
- victim-survivors had better experiences with medical and support services
- the criminal justice system re-victimised victim-survivors
- victim-survivors were not given sufficient information
- victim-survivors think the system could respond better.

We also undertook semi-structured interviews and focus groups with police (including police prosecutors), prosecutors from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, defence lawyers from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service and Legal Aid Queensland, and Counsel about their experiences investigating, prosecuting and defending non-fatal strangulation. The outcome of this research was published in a research report just after the reporting period.

Consultation

The Commission published its Consultation paper: A holistic review of the non-strangulation offence in April 2025. It discusses and invites feedback on three reform proposals and eight questions. The proposals include repealing the current offence and replacing it with three new offences, specifying defences that should not apply, and allowing adult perpetrators who plead guilty to be sentenced in the Magistrates Court in certain circumstances. We received 26 submissions in response to the consultation paper.

During 2024–25, we have consulted widely, obtaining feedback from 668 stakeholders at 158 consultation events throughout metropolitan, regional and remote areas of Queensland. Feedback from consultation sessions and submissions will inform development of our final report and recommendations.

Further work in 2025–26

The Commission will continue its work to develop the final report and recommendations to give to the Attorney-General by 30 September 2025. As part of this process, we will continue to meet stakeholders to obtain their perspectives as we refine reform proposals.

Reviews on hold

Two reviews are currently on hold:

- review of Queensland’s laws relating to workplace surveillance
- review of the criminalisation of serious disease transmission.

There will be no ongoing work on these reviews while they are on hold.

Review of Queensland’s laws relating to workplace surveillance

On 24 July 2018 the Attorney-General referred to the Commission for review and investigation the issue of privacy protections for workers in the context of current and emerging surveillance devices in workplaces. The review has been overtaken by new references and other events and is currently on hold.

Review of the criminalisation of serious disease transmission

On 25 September 2024 the Attorney-General referred to the Commission for review and investigation the provisions of the Criminal Code that concern the transmission of serious disease. The final report is due by 31 August 2026. The review was scheduled to commence on 1 July 2025 but was placed on hold on 26 June 2025.

The terms of reference require the Commission to examine:

- proposed section 348AA(1)(m) of the Criminal Code, to be inserted by the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (not yet commenced) and the appropriateness of the provision in the context of the affirmative consent framework provided in that Act
- existing provisions in the Criminal Code which apply to transmission of, or exposure to, serious disease, specifically:
 - offences which rely upon the definition of ‘serious disease’ in the Criminal Code, including section 317
 - offences which indirectly capture serious disease transmission through the definition of ‘grievous bodily harm’ in the Criminal Code, including section 320
 - any other provisions in the Criminal Code which may apply to serious disease transmission or exposure.

The Commission is also asked to make recommendations on:

- whether proposed section 348AA(1)(m) of the Criminal Code should be commenced, amended or repealed
- whether there is a need for reform of existing provisions in the Criminal Code which apply to the transmission of, or exposure to, serious disease, and if so, in what way
- any other matters the Commission considers relevant having regard to the issues relating to the referral, including whether there is a need for amendment to relevant

offence or other provisions in the Public Health Act 2005 (and if so, the specific nature of the amendments).

Our people

Commission members

At 30 June 2025, the Commission had seven part-time members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair.

Chair

Fleur Kingham

Part-time Chair: 1 April 2024 – current.

Chair and Full-time Member: 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

Part-time Member: 17 March 2022 – 31 March 2023.

The current term of appointment of Ms Fleur Kingham is from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027.

Ms Kingham was the President of the Land Court of Queensland from 2016 to 2024 and is the immediate past-President of the Australian Association of Women Judges.

The Chair's distinguished legal career includes judicial appointments as Deputy President of the Land and Resources Tribunal, the first Deputy President of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and Judge of the District Court of Queensland.

Ms Kingham is passionate about judicial education and regularly presents for the National Judicial College of Australia. Ms Kingham has a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Queensland and a Master of International Law (Dist) from the University of Nottingham and is a continuing member of the Griffith Law School Visiting Committee. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Griffith University in 2016. She was named the Eminent Environmental Lawyer of the Year by the Law Council of Australia in 2024.

Deputy Chair

His Honour Judge Anthony Rafter SC

17 September 2020 – current.

The current term of appointment of His Honour Judge Rafter SC is from 17 September 2023 to 16 September 2026.

Judge Rafter is a judge of the District Court of Queensland, the Childrens Court of Queensland, and the Planning and Environment Court.

Judge Rafter has also served as an Acting Judge on the District Court of New South Wales in 2019, as Acting Justice on the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2021 and Acting President of the Childrens Court from June 2022 to November 2022. Judge Rafter was admitted as a barrister in 1985 and appointed Senior Counsel in 2003.

Judge Rafter has previously been the Chairperson of the Nursing Tribunal, a member of the Board of Legal Aid Queensland and a Commissioner of the Queensland Thoroughbred Racing Inquiry. Judge Rafter is a graduate of the Queensland Institute of Technology completing a Bachelor of Laws.

Mr Mark Hinson KC

17 September 2020 – current.

The current term of appointment of Mr Hinson KC is from 17 September 2023 to 16 September 2026.

He is a graduate of The University of Queensland completing a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws (Hons). He completed a Master of Laws at the University of Cambridge and was admitted as a barrister in 1981.

Mr Hinson tutored law at the University of Queensland until commencing full-time practice as a barrister in 1986. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1998 and was appointed an Acting Judge of the District Court between August and November 1998.

Dr Alice Taylor

17 March 2022 – current.

The current term of appointment of Dr Taylor is from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027.

She is an Assistant Professor at Bond University. Her field of research expertise is human rights law with a specific focus on discrimination and equality rights. She regularly engages in public policy debates surrounding these issues.

Dr Taylor received her PhD from the Australian National University in 2020 which focused on discrimination law in Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada. She has undertaken visiting positions at universities in the United Kingdom and Canada. She has taught across a range of subjects including human rights, torts, contracts, and public and constitutional law.

Prior to entering academia, Dr Taylor was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 2013. She has worked as a solicitor at a top-tier commercial law firm, an Associate at the Supreme Court of Queensland and the Legal Research Officer at the High Court of Australia.

Mr Glen Cranny

17 September 2023 – current.

The current term of appointment of Mr Cranny is from 17 September 2023 to 16 September 2026.

He has practiced as a solicitor since 1995, is an accredited specialist in criminal law, and a regular author, presenter, lecturer and media commentator on criminal law and related topics. His clients span the public and private sectors, the legal and health professions, and law enforcement. In 2010, Mr Cranny was appointed a Senior Counsellor of the Queensland Law Society, and in 2019 was awarded the Queensland Law Society President's Medal for services to the legal profession. His professional interests include the legal education of young lawyers, public sector ethics, and scientific evidence.

Ms Ruth O'Gorman KC

17 November 2023 – current.

The current term of appointment of Ms O’Gorman KC is from 17 November 2023 to 16 November 2026.

She practices in criminal law where she appears in trials in the Supreme, District and Magistrates Courts of Queensland, and appeals in the High Court of Australia and Queensland Court of Appeal.

In 2023, Doyles Guide listed Ms O’Gorman as a pre-eminent senior counsel in criminal law in Queensland and a recommended senior counsel in criminal law in Australia. She also accepts briefs in professional disciplinary matters and regulatory prosecutions.

Ms O’Gorman appears in inquiries and inquests. In 2022, she was the senior Counsel Assisting the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence. In 2020-21, Ms O’Gorman was one of the Counsel Assisting the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry.

Ms Avelina Tarrago

1 July 2024 – current.

The current term of appointment of Ms Tarrago is from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.

She is a Wangkamahdla woman from central-west Queensland. She is a barrister with a practice focused on inquests and inquiries, health, regulatory and administrative law jurisdictions.

Ms Tarrago previously had a 17-year career in the public service as a Government Legal Officer for the Coroners Court of Queensland, Office of the Health Ombudsman, and Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. In 2014 she completed an Indigenous Fellowship with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. She was appointed to the Board of Legal Aid Queensland in 2023.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Reference Group

During the reporting period, we established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Reference Group. At 30 June 2025, the Reference Group had 10 members.

Chair

Ms Avelina Tarrago

Ms Tarrago’s biography has been included above as a Commission member.

The Honourable Justice Lincoln Crowley

The Honourable Justice Lincoln Crowley holds a Bachelor of Laws from James Cook University, a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Queensland University of Technology and a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Political Science, from the University of New England. He was admitted to practice in Queensland in 1997.

His first role after admission was as a solicitor with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, initially in Townsville and then later in Brisbane. After several years he moved to New South Wales, where he worked as a senior solicitor within the New South Wales Crown Solicitor’s Office, and later was called to the Sydney private bar. There he practised in both civil

and criminal fields before returning to the public sector as In-House Counsel with the Sydney Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. After several years in that role his Honour returned to Queensland to take up a position as a Principal Crown Prosecutor for the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, before finally settling into practise at the Queensland private bar, where he specialised in crime and all areas of public law for many years.

In 2018, his Honour became the first Indigenous person appointed as Queen's Counsel in the State of Queensland. On 13 June 2022, Justice Crowley was sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland, becoming the first Indigenous judge appointed to a superior court in Australia.

His Honour Judge Nathan Jarro

His Honour Judge Jarro identifies as Ghangalu on his father's side and Bidjara on his mother's side. In March 2018, Judge Jarro was appointed to the District Court of Queensland. Before joining the bench, his Honour was called to the Bar in 2004 after practising previously as a solicitor for a number of years. From 2022, Judge Jarro has been a member of the University of Queensland Senate.

Magistrate Jacqui Payne

Magistrate Payne was the first Indigenous woman to be admitted as a solicitor in Queensland. Magistrate Payne commenced her legal career in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service before running her own firm and then being appointed as a magistrate in 1999, another first in Queensland.

Mr Adrian Geary

Mr Geary is a proud Aboriginal descendant of the Bidjara people and currently serves as the Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Programs and Partnerships with the Department of Justice. With 25 years of service in the Queensland Police Service, Mr Geary concluded his career as Officer in Charge of the Gordonvale Police Station. He was also a key figure in founding the QPS First Nations Network, promoting First Nations leadership and reform. Mr Geary has over 20 years of experience in the Domestic and Family Violence sector and serves as Chair and Community Engagement Director at Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service, advocating for vulnerable communities.

Professor Boni Robertson

Professor Robertson is a First Nations woman whose cultural background is aligned with Kabi Kabi and Gorang Gorang People through her matriarchal bloodline. Professor Robertson has a widely recognised and respected career having held senior executive or leadership positions as a First Nations woman in higher education, within Government and in community-based agencies that align with her passion for human rights, culturally responsive and respectful education and social justice. Throughout her career Professor Robertson has held senior academic, research, advocate and representative positions at the state, national and international level where she has worked to progress the goals and aspirations of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, the Universal Declaration on Human

Rights and other international and national instruments and policy statements pertinent to protecting, promoting and progressing the basic human rights of First Nations People.

Mr Joshua Creamer

Mr Creamer is Waanyi and Kalkadoon. He practices as a barrister and is a former Commissioner at the Queensland Law Reform Commission and the former Chair of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry in Queensland.

Mr Karl McKenzie

Mr McKenzie is the Chair of the Townsville Community Justice Group. He is also a Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Adjudicator and holds many other roles on boards and committees, like the Queensland Parole Board and the Queensland Chief Magistrates Advisory Committee. Mr McKenzie is a respected Aboriginal Elder with strong ties to the Townsville community.

Ms Kristen Hodge

Ms Hodge is a Wiradjuri woman from NSW, born and raised on the Galare (Lachlan) River in Forbes. Ms Hodge is the current president of the Indigenous Lawyers Association of Queensland Inc and the Co-Chair of the Queensland Law Society First Nations Legal Policy Committee. During her time working in the law, Ms Hodge has specialised in native title and cultural heritage.

Ms Lala Gutchen

Ms Gutchen is a proud Meuram woman from Erub Island in the Torres Strait. Ms Gutchen is a cultural knowledge holder, fisherwoman, mother, community organiser, and a strong advocate for the cultural rights of her people and families. Ms Gutchen was a key cultural witness in a historic winning Queensland Land Court case, where she provided evidence for her people about the impact that the carbon emissions from the Waratah Coal's Galilee Coal Project would have on the Torres Strait Islands, which are threatened by rising sea levels due to climate change and unusual weather patterns. She continues to serve her community as a First Language Programs Facilitator and ailan youth ambassador for the Our Islands Our Home campaign.

Reference Group meetings

The Reference Group held its first formal meeting on 5 February 2025. At this meeting, members of the Reference Group were introduced to each other and provided with overviews of each of the then three active reviews the Commission was undertaking. Our approach to consultation with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples was also discussed.

The Reference Group met again on 5 March 2025 to discuss the consultation material for the review of particular criminal defences, as well as the withdrawal of the review of the mining lease objections process.

Commission secretariat

The Commission members are supported by a small secretariat which undertakes research, analysis and consultation in support of law reform recommendations. The secretariat also

provides the Commission with administrative and secretarial support. At the end of 2024–25, the secretariat had a total of 22 staff, with 12 engaged on a permanent basis and 10 engaged on a temporary basis. At the end of the reporting period, the Commission secretariat comprised:

Director

- Dr Emma Phillips

Principal Legal Officers

- Anita Galeazzi
- Jodie O’Leary
- Steve Baso

Principal Communications and Publications Officer

- Julia Starkey

Principal Research Analyst

- Helen Punter

Senior Legal Officers

- Bob Wallace (also Executive Officer, Secretariats Support)
- Dayne Kingsford
- Hannah Chantrill
- Dr Nia Emmanouil
- Rachna Nagesh
- Dr Sarah Kendall

Legal Officers

- Carley Ruiz
- Clare Foran
- Jack Cuming
- Jessica Lakeman
- Steph Payne

Research Associate

- Dom Kendall-Frost

Business Manager

- Natalie Collins

Administration Officer

- Natasha Relf

Cathy Green and Lani Olafsson were on extended leave at the end of the reporting period.

Corporate Governance

Program of Work

Section 10(3)(c) of the Law Reform Commission Act 1968 requires the Commission to prepare and submit a proposed program of law reform to the Attorney-General for approval. The program assists the Attorney-General to identify suitable law reform topics for reference to the Commission. A proposed program is subject to variation by the Attorney-General, before or after its approval, under section 10(4) of the Act. The Commission has a protocol for developing proposed programs, which outlines our process for identifying and selecting suitable law reform topics.

During the year the Commission sought ideas for law reform topics from stakeholders and the community, with nominations closing on 28 March 2025. These ideas have been considered in developing a proposed future law reform program for the five-year period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2030. The program includes a total of six reviews over the period, including three one-year reviews and three two-year reviews. It has been prepared on the basis that the Commission is resourced and funded to deliver the program. The proposed program will be submitted for the approval of the Attorney-General in the first half of 2025–26.

Our publications

A list of our reports, working papers and miscellaneous papers is available on our website. Copies of the Commission's recent publications, and most of its older publications, are also available on the website. The website also details legislative action taken on Commission reports.

Meetings of the Commission

During the reporting period, there were a total of 13 formal commission meetings. This consisted of nine full Commission meetings, two meetings of the Mining Team, and two meetings of the Criminal Defences Team. During the reporting period there were an additional 11 meetings related to consultation or activities of the Commission.

Appointment of Commission members

Members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor in Council on the advice of the Attorney-General. The Law Reform Commission Act 1968 provides that the Commission must consist of at least three members, who may be full-time or part-time members.

To be appointed as a Commission member each person must be suitably qualified by the holding of judicial office or by experience as a barrister, solicitor or teacher of law in a university.

Remuneration of Commission members

Part-time members of the Commission who are not judicial officers are remunerated in accordance with the Queensland Government policy, Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies.

The total remuneration paid to part-time members for work performed in 2024–25 was \$269,000.¹

Part-time members who are judicial officers do not receive remuneration for performing the duties of a part-time member.

Right to Information Act 2009

In accordance with the requirements of the Right to Information Act 2009, the Commission's website includes a publication scheme. That scheme describes and categorises information routinely available from the Commission and the terms on which the information will be made available.

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994

The Commission, as a public sector entity, has an approved code of conduct that applies to the members of the Commission in their capacity as public officials. The Commission's code of conduct is available on our website.

The staff of the Commission secretariat, as employees of the Department of Justice, are covered by the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service.

In accordance with the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, during the reporting period, new staff of the secretariat completed face-to-face Ethics and professional conduct training, and other staff completed annual online refresher training from the Department of Justice.

¹ See Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Members, meetings and remuneration²

Position	Name	Meetings / sessions attendance	Approved annual, sessional or daily fee ³	Approved sub-committee fees if applicable	Actual fees paid ⁴
Chair	Ms Fleur Kingham	12	Annual fee of \$240,000	N/A	\$240,000
Deputy Chair	His Honour Judge Anthony Rafter SC	11	Nil	N/A	Nil
Member	Mr Mark Hinson KC	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting (4 hrs or less): \$250 • Meeting (more than 4hrs): \$500 • Additional work (4 hrs or less): \$250 • Additional work (more than 4hrs): \$500 	N/A	\$5,750
	Dr Alice Taylor	11	As above	N/A	\$5,500
	Mr Glen Cranny	12	As above	N/A	\$5,500
	Ms Ruth O'Gorman KC	14	As above	N/A	\$6,250
	Ms Avelina Tarrago	13	As above	N/A	\$6,000
	Total fees paid				

² The Commission is not a 'statutory body' within the meaning of s 9 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009 as it is 'a part of a department' within the meaning of s 8(3) of that Act (given the source of its funding).

³ A part-time member who is a judicial officer does not receive any salary or fees for performing the duties of a part-time member of the Commission: Law Reform Commission Act 1968 (Qld) s 13.

⁴ Actual fees paid exclude superannuation, and include fees due to members for work completed in the current financial year. Due to delays in processing, some fees may be actually paid in the following financial year.

