Review of the Public Safety Business Agency frequently asked questions

1. Background

1.1 Why was the review undertaken?

During the 2015 state election, the Queensland Government made a commitment to conduct an official review into the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA), in recognition of ongoing employee and union concerns about the effectiveness of the model.

1.2 Who undertook the review?

Responsibility for undertaking the review was attributed to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services through the Ministerial Charter Letter. The Minister sought assistance from the Commission Chief Executive (Acting) of the Public Service Commission (PSC) to conduct the review.

In conducting the review, the PSC received support from senior officers of all portfolio agencies, as well as key staff from the Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and the PSBA who were seconded to assist the review.

A steering committee oversaw the review and members included:

- Commission Chief Executive (Acting), PSC—Chair
- Commissioner of Police
- Commissioner of Fire and Emergency Services
- Chief Executive Officer, PSBA.

The review process included significant stakeholder engagement, including statewide workshops with employees, and interaction with major unions and associations.

2. Key findings

2.1 What are the key findings of the PSBA review?

The review found that while the PSBA has achieved some successes and the model does create many potential opportunities, stakeholders primarily identified concerns and frustrations with existing arrangements.

The majority of problems identified were caused by confusion over the scope, purpose and function of the PSBA.

2.2 What are the key changes recommended?

The review recommends that the PSBA continues to operate as a corporate services delivery agency with a more clearly defined role, more targeted scope and clearer governance arrangements.

The review has made a number of recommendations to enable the PSBA and the portfolio model to reach its potential. This includes implementing a new organisational structure and instilling a service-focussed culture in the PSBA.

The review recommends that all operational services, as well as services directly linked to operations and the administration of their agencies, be the responsibility of the respective commissioners of QPS and QFES. This approach provides both QPS and QFES with the necessary levers to manage effective delivery of public safety services to the community.
The review recommends the following services be returned to QPS and QFES:

- operational functions
- strategy
- recruitment
- education and training
- local workplace health and safety
- employee engagement
- ethical standards
- media services
- ministerial services, and
- cabinet legislation liaison.

The review also recommends the following services be delivered by the PSBA:

- all information communications and technology services
- all financial services
- all procurement services
- all asset management services
- some tactical human resource services, and
- some advisory services or corporate service strategies.

It is recommended that a Board of Management be created to oversee the activities of the PSBA, and undertake portfolio-wide planning and strategy.

The review makes separate recommendations regarding operational services currently delivered by the PSBA. It recommends that QPS regain command and control of their air services through the transfer of Police Air Wing (PAW) to QPS.

The following operational services are also recommended to transfer out of the PSBA:

- Blue Card Services to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG)
- State Government Security to QPS.

2.2 Has the government accepted the recommendations of the review?

The Queensland Government has accepted the recommendations of the review with the exception of recommendation six (to transfer the Police Air Wing to QPS). Further work will be progressed on this recommendation to ensure cost impacts are minimised and recognising the importance of progressing the changes concurrently with work undertaken to achieve the Air Operators Certificate (AOC) and options for fleet consolidation.

Recommendations will be implemented in a staged approach by QPS, QFES and the PSBA. An interim Board of Management will oversee this process.

The transfer of Blue Card services will be done in full consultation with DJAG.

3. Employees

3.1 What does this mean for police officers currently working in PSBA?

All police officers attached to the functions that are returning to QPS will transition back to QPS.

All other police officers currently attached to PSBA will return to a functional area within QPS (e.g. Operational Capability Command). However, arrangements will continue, as appropriate, for officers to perform roles embedded in PSBA functional units. Duties undertaken by those officers will remain substantially the same with officers providing support and advice to enhance the provision of corporate services to the QPS (e.g. business services, frontline and digital services).
Appropriate consultation will occur with police officers and staff members regarding the particulars of any change.

Transition back to the QPS will not have any impact on existing police tenure arrangements.

### 3.2 What does the review mean for PSBA employees?

The review recommends movement of a number of PSBA functions by machinery-of-government change. This will mean that some employees will change employer, some roles may change and there may be changes to the location of staff. Some staff will be unaffected by the review’s recommendations, as they will continue in their current roles unchanged.

While there may be changes for a number of staff, the Queensland Government has continued to emphasise its strong commitment to employment security. All agencies will ensure that all organisational change is conducted in a way that supports this policy.

All agencies are committed to working with and supporting affected employees through times of change.

Each agency has set up its own implementation team to support a smooth transition to the new model. Over the coming months, those teams will work through specific details of the implementation process and movement of staff, overseen by the interim Board of Management.

Due to the planning required and administrative processes to be carried out, there will be no formal movement of staff, prior to the stated implementation date of 1 July 2016.

### 3.3 What does this mean for QFES employees?

Where specific PSBA functions will transition to QFES, employees will be identified to transition over the coming months. The detail of these transitions will be determined by the QFES implementation team.

### 3.4 What about volunteers?

The review recognises the significant contribution volunteers make to the state’s emergency operations, and the need to further encourage and sustain volunteers.

### 4. Implementation and transition

#### 4.1 What are the timeframes for implementation?

The recommendations will be implemented in a phased approach to ensure appropriate planning and communication of changes, and to ensure a smooth transition.

It is anticipated that legislative amendments (required to revise the role of the PSBA and create the board of management) will be in place to take effect from 1 July 2016. Administrative arrangements to support the movement of functions in a machinery-of-government change are also planned to take effect from 1 July 2016.

This means there will be no immediate changes for employees until that time.

#### 4.2 What is the plan for going forward?

The interim Board of Management will oversee implementation of the structural reforms.

Each agency has established a transition team to lead the implementation process. Membership of those teams will be communicated shortly.

Team contact details are:
- ReviewPSBA@psba.qld.gov.au
- ReviewPSBA@police.qld.gov.au
- ReviewPSBA@qfes.qld.gov.au
Implementation of the recommendations will be an iterative process. Not all details will be evident at the outset of implementation but as they do become evident, they will be communicated to managers for discussion with employees.

The transition teams will provide regular reports to the interim Board of Management on implementation progress and to resolve any issues that may arise.

4.3 What consultation has occurred with unions?
All stakeholder unions were consulted during the review period. The Queensland Government is committed to ongoing consultation with unions throughout the implementation process.

5. General

5.1 Where can I access the PSBA report?
The report is available to download from the Public Service Commission website at www.psc.qld.gov.au/PSBAreview

5.2 What will the impact be on service delivery?
The PSBA will continue to provide services to the Inspector-General Emergency Management and the Queensland Ambulance Service. The new structure will in no way compromise operational effectiveness.

6. More information

6.1 Who can I contact for more information?
Contact details are available on department intranet sites.

The full report and department-specific information can be accessed through department intranet sites.

6.2 How can I receive support during this process?
Departments have employee assistance programs through which employees can access support during the transition. Information is located on each agency’s intranet site.