

**REGIONAL DELIVERY OF FIRST YEAR
CONSTABLE TRAINING: AN EVALUATION**

June 1996

Research and Co-ordination Division

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ABBREVIATIONS

CJC	Criminal Justice Commission
DETO	District Education and Training Officer
FTO	Field Training Officer
FYC	First Year Constable
PROVE	Police Recruit Operational Vocational Education
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RETC	Regional Education and Training Co-ordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 1995, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) changed the way in which it allocated First Year Constables (FYCs) to the regions. The policy change, which resulted in the re-allocation of the FYCs on a statewide basis, was prompted by concerns over staffing levels at various northern establishments and was seen as a way of encouraging officers to work in the north.

This research paper reports on a Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) evaluation of the impact of this policy change on the delivery of FYC training. The key findings are as follows:

MANAGEMENT OF THE ALLOCATION PROCESS

- In general, FYC Program staff, regional and district training staff were satisfied with the way that the allocation of FYCs has been handled under the new policy. However, a substantial number of FYCs (39%) felt that the change in allocation policy was not handled well. This finding was not surprising and probably reflects the fact that for reasons beyond the control of the FYC Program, some FYC allocation preferences had to be changed by the QPS in order to send the FYCs to the three northern regions.

SUPERVISION OF THE PROGRAM

- Almost all regional and district training staff interviewed for this evaluation felt that the FYC Program was well supervised. However, some training staff located in the north perceived that southern regions, particularly in the south-east corner of the State, have better access to FYC Program staff.
- Although consistency of training is improving, standards still tend to vary from region to region. One of the main reasons for this may be that some District Education and Training Officers (DETOs) lack training in the preparation and delivery of training packages. Another reason for the inconsistency in training outcomes is that there is no standard package of training materials designed to assist the DETOs.

PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES IN THE FIELD

- Some regions are finding it exceedingly difficult to fund, assign facilities to, or make personnel available for training purposes. There is a strong commitment on the part of regional staff to minimise the effect that operational considerations have on the training of FYCs, but the program is seen by some police supervisors and managers as having a low priority.
- Some regions, particularly in the south, tend to regard FYCs as an operational resource and routinely use them to supplement a station's complement. However, the situation is being kept in check, to a large extent, by the monitoring strategies which are in place to ensure compliance with FYC Program guidelines.
- Without exception, all regional personnel expressed a high level of support for the program. FYCs also provided a very positive assessment of the support that had been provided to them during the program.

- Some regions are experiencing a high turnover of training staff. The problem seems particularly acute in the north, where the ratio of training officers to sworn members is significantly lower than in some of the southern regions.
- DETOs from the smaller centres have reported the lack of adequate training facilities. Currently, most regional and district training staff use existing meeting rooms for training days. Suitable meeting space is often scarce and training staff report that they have to compete with other groups for access.

DELIVERY OF TRAINING

- There were no significant regional differences in the average length of service for Field Training Officers (FTOs) and the level of performance of FTOs. However, northern regions have substantially fewer FTOs available to train FYCs than regions located in the south. Because of the limited pool of FTOs, some FYCs have been described as being close to “burnout”. The problem may get worse as the number of FYCs increases.
- FTOs generally feel that they are not properly trained and that they do not receive any formal recognition for the work that they do. The strong view expressed by FTOs was that their training should be substantially revised, centralised and standardised.
- Overall, the general consensus amongst the FYCs, FYC Program staff and regional and district training staff was that the FYC Program does a very good job in preparing the FYCs for operational policing duties.

QUALITY OF TRAINING

- There were few regional differences in the range of policing experiences that FYCs receive during the FYC Program. The only major differences were that FYCs allocated to northern regions reported having a greater exposure to domestic violence and traffic enforcement related activities, whereas FYCs assigned to southern regions have a greater involvement in issuing warrants and traffic control activities.
- FYCs have a much higher exposure to reactive policing tasks than to pro-active community-based police work during the program. This is probably a reflection of the reality of general duties policing, as well as a consequence of the emphasis that both the Police Recruit Operational Vocational Education (PROVE) program and the FYC Program have placed on preparing FYCs for operational policing duties.

Overall, the evaluation identified few significant differences between northern and southern regions in terms of the delivery of the FYC Program. However, there is a need to address the key findings identified in this report. In particular, attention should be given to:

- improving the level of knowledge that FYCs have about the allocation process
- enhancing the level of support provided by the FYC Program to all regions, including those located in the north
- reviewing the way that DETOs and FTOs are recruited, selected, trained and rewarded to ensure that regions have sufficient numbers of quality training staff to properly deliver the program

- **developing a standardised package of appropriate “directive” training materials to assist the DETOs in the delivery of the program, so as to help maintain consistency in training outcomes**
- **developing appropriate monitoring strategies in order to prevent the diversion of FYCs into mainstream policing before they are fully prepared and ensure that the Program guidelines are being complied with to the greatest extent possible.**

INTRODUCTION

In late 1993 the Queensland Police Service (QPS) introduced a policy under which First Year Constables (FYCs) were only allocated to regions in the south-eastern corner of the State. The rationale for the policy adopted in 1993 was to ensure more effective supervision of the FYCs, maintain consistency in training standards, ensure that training needs were not displaced by operational considerations, and allow for better integration between the field and Academy.

In early 1995 this policy was changed to enable the re-allocation of the FYCs on a statewide basis. This change was prompted by concerns over staffing levels at various northern establishments and was seen as a way of encouraging officers to work in the north.

The change in policy relating to the allocation of FYCs is an important issue for three reasons:

- The policy change represented a substantial shift in the priorities of the program.
- A significant number of FYCs will be affected by the policy change. Of the 477 FYCs deployed between July 1994 and April 1996, 132 were allocated to northern centres.
- Concerns have been expressed about the implications of the policy change for the quality of training. The Academy, the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) and the Police Education Advisory Council have all indicated that the quality and consistency of training are critical issues, given the problems encountered with the previous field training program. However, staff in northern regions feel strongly that they can provide quality training to the FYCs.

In 1995 the CJC, with the co-operation of the QPS, commenced an evaluation to assess the impact of the change in the allocation policy on FYC training. The CJC's involvement in evaluating the program derives from section 56(3)(f)(iv) of the *Criminal Justice Act 1989*, which gives the Research and Co-ordination Division a monitoring role in relation to education and training in the QPS.

THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLE PROGRAM

The 12-month FYC Program is a structured "on the job" training program for recruits after their graduation from the Police Recruit Operational Vocational Education (PROVE) program at the Police Academy.

The FYC Program is designed to expose FYCs to operational policing in a closely monitored environment. The FYC Program consists of two parts. The first part (a minimum period of eight weeks) is known as the *mentor phase*. This period allows for supervised operational training of FYCs in the weeks immediately following their graduation from the Academy. For these weeks, the FYC is teamed with a Field Training Officer (FTO) - an experienced police officer who has been selected and trained to perform this role. During the mentor phase, the FYCs are required to achieve a range of basic operational competencies in various tasks such as preparing activity reports and using official notebooks.

At the conclusion of the mentor phase, providing that the operational competencies have been achieved, the FYCs move onto the *general training phase*. The general training phase lasts for 42 weeks. During this time, the FYCs are rostered for at least half of their shifts with an FTO. Further competencies, such as random breath testing, care of exhibits and traffic control must also be completed during this period.

In addition to the "hands-on" training in the field, the FYCs also participate in regular training days and towards the end of the program submit a case study on an operational policing issue or incident.

An ongoing review process during the program assesses the FYCs' performance and attitude. If these reviews are positive, and all competencies have been achieved, the FYC receives an appointment as a Constable in the QPS.

THE AIMS AND DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION¹

The primary aim of the evaluation was to determine whether the quality of training provided to the FYCs varies significantly between the regions. The evaluation was not designed to assess whether the FYC Program as a whole has achieved its objectives. We chose not to undertake an impact evaluation at this stage because of the difficulties generally associated with measuring educational objectives (such as behavioural and attitudinal outcomes) and the longer time-frame required to collect data on these types of outcomes.

The evaluation was structured around five key issues:

- management of the allocation process
- supervision of the program
- priorities and resources in the field
- delivery of training
- quality of training.

DATA SOURCES

Data collection was undertaken over the period from July 1995 to February 1996. The main data sources were:

- *Surveys of FYCs.* A survey was administered to all FYCs in the January 1994, May 1994 and October 1994 recruit intakes. The January and May intakes were surveyed towards the end of the program, while the October intake survey was conducted at the six-month stage of the program (see Table 1). Some FYCs in the January intake were re-allocated to northern regions part-way through their training. The results of the FYC survey are summarised and included as an attachment to this report.

TABLE 1 – FYC SURVEY TIMELINE

Recruit Intake	Period of Survey	Stage of FYC Training
January 1994 cohort	July – August 1995	End (10 months)
May 1994 cohort	October – November 1995	End (10 months)
October 1994 cohort	December 1995	Mid-way (6 months)

1 The evaluation design was circulated to FYC Program staff and the Commissioner's Inspectorate for comment before commencing the evaluation.

- *Interviews with training staff.* To gain more detailed information about the operation of the program, interviews were conducted in three northern regions (Far Northern, Northern, Central) and three southern regions (Metropolitan North, Metropolitan South, South Eastern). These open-ended interviews were undertaken by research officers of the CJC. Where possible, the Assistant Commissioner, Regional Education and Training Co-ordinator (RETC), District Education and Training Officers (DETOs), and FTOs were interviewed. Because of resource constraints, it was not possible to undertake interviews in all regions.
- *Program records.* Information on matters such as the ratio of FTOs to FYCs and attendance at training days, was obtained from the QPS for the month of November 1995.

Table 2 (below) summarises the key evaluation issues and data sources.

TABLE 2 – LINKS BETWEEN EVALUATION ISSUES AND DATA SOURCES

Evaluation Area	Key Issues	Data Sources
Allocation of FYCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difficulties have been experienced in allocating FYCs to regions? 	Interviews of program staff and regional training staff; Surveys of FYCs.
Supervision of the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the FYC Program staff been able to perform an effective monitoring role? • Is consistency in training being maintained? 	Interviews of program staff and regional training officers. Interviews of program staff and regional training staff; Surveys of FYCs; Program records.
Priorities and resources in the field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have operational considerations impacted on training? • How supportive have regions been of the training program? • Have adequate resources been provided in the regions? 	Interviews of program staff, regional training staff and FTOs; Program records/staffing levels; Surveys of FYCs. Interviews of program staff, regional training staff and FTOs; Program records; Surveys of FYCs. Interviews of program staff; regional training staff and FTOs; Program records; Surveys of FYCs.
Delivery of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well have the FTOs performed in their training role? 	Surveys of FYCs; Interviews with FTOs.
Quality of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How prepared are the FYCs for their duties as Constables at the end of the program? • Have the FYCs in the various regions been exposed to similar range of tasks/situations? 	Interviews of regional training staff and FTOs; Surveys of FYCs. Interview of program staff, regional training officers; Surveys of FYCs; Program records.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

MANAGING THE ALLOCATION OF FIRST YEAR CONSTABLES

WHAT DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED IN ALLOCATING FYCs TO REGIONS?

The process for determining where recruits will be allocated for the FYC Program commences at the mid-way point in the PROVE program. At a meeting with recruits, the FYC Program staff distribute a list of Training Centres² and the number of vacancies available at each location. The recruits are asked to review the detailed list and nominate three preferences from these proposed locations. This process takes a number of weeks which allows the recruits time to negotiate an allocation outcome amongst themselves prior to officially nominating their preferences.

The FYC Program staff then attempt to match the FYCs first preference to a vacancy at a particular Training Centre. An FYC Program staff member stated that, in almost all cases, the FYC receives their first or second preference. In some cases, the FYC cannot be accommodated. On these few occasions, the FYC is encouraged to discuss the matter with the FYC Program staff. Any FYC who remains dissatisfied with the decision has the right of review through proper channels.

In general, FYC Program, regional and district training staff were satisfied with the way that the allocation of FYCs has been handled under the new policy. However, there was some dissatisfaction among FYCs with the way they were allocated to regions. For reasons beyond the control of the FYC Program, some allocation preferences were changed by the QPS in order to send the FYCs to the three northern regions. As a result, a substantial number of the respondents in each cohort (32% January; 52% May; 33% October) felt that the allocation process had been managed poorly (see Appendix). These findings suggest that the QPS should explore ways of improving the level of knowledge that FYCs have about the allocation process. Reviewing how these allocation decisions are made and communicated to the FYCs is likely to increase the level of satisfaction that FYCs have with the allocation process.

SUPERVISING THE PROGRAM

HAVE THE FYC PROGRAM STAFF BEEN ABLE TO PERFORM AN EFFECTIVE MONITORING ROLE?

The FYC Program has four levels of quality control and supervision. The first level involves the FTO who is responsible for the on-the-job training and assessment of the FYC. The second level of control are the DETOs, who facilitate the training days and regularly report on the standard of training being provided to the FYC. The third level of control involves the RETC who moderates the training standard³ within the region. The fourth level of control involves a small number of FYC Program staff located at the Academy who monitor and gauge the training standards set down for the FYC Program. The FYC Program Unit's primary responsibilities are to ensure that all regions work to the same level of achievement and that training outcomes are consistent on a statewide basis.

2 A Training Centre is selected on the basis that the unit or station can provide quality monitoring, proper supervision and adequate training. The number and location of Training Centres considered suitable for the training of FYCs is determined by the Human Resource Development Branch of the QPS.

3 The term 'training standard' refers to the minimum competencies that a FYC must achieve prior to being allowed to exit the program.

The ability of the FYC Program Unit to effectively monitor the program on a statewide basis was a particular focus of this evaluation. The monitoring role performed by the Unit primarily focuses on the quality and delivery of training, and principally consists of:

- reviewing training audit reports forwarded by the districts to the Unit
- making periodic visits to regional centres to examine shift rosters, training files and FTO progress reports
- interviewing training staff and FYCs regarding the FYC's progress in the program.

A review of the 1995 FYC Program records showed that during regional visits FYC Program staff concentrated on four main areas of interest:

- administrative matters, e.g. program management and supervision
- content and standard of training
- operational matters, e.g. rostering practices
- the standard of FTO reports.

In general, almost all regional and district training staff felt that the FYC Program staff did an effective job in supervising the program. However, some training staff located in the northern regions perceived that regions in the south-east corner of the State have better access to FYC Program staff.

The FYC Program staff interviewed for this evaluation agreed that the program of regular visits to the regions was important to ensure that the standards of the program were being met and appropriate training outcomes were being achieved. Although FYC Program staff stated that they would like to be able to visit the regions on a more frequent basis, they indicated that they have conducted all the training visits and audits currently required. The FYC Program staff further advised that the budget proposal for 1996/97 will allow for additional visits for each induction group. It is likely that this increase in visitations will considerably enhance the level of support provided to all regions, including those located in the north.

IS CONSISTENCY IN TRAINING BEING MAINTAINED?

The FYC Program relies on three key mechanisms for maintaining consistency in training:

- achievement of set competencies (including formal study units)
- participation in training days covering areas of the core curriculum
- completion of a research or case study.

There were slight differences of opinion amongst regional and district training staff and FYC Program staff as to whether the change in allocation policy had affected the consistency of training on a statewide basis. Almost all regional and district training staff indicated that they had a high level of confidence in their ability to maintain the training standards set down for the program. However, some FYC Program staff felt that, although consistency of training is continually improving, there were some problems. A FYC Program staff member suggested that inconsistency in training was due, in part, to

the fact that DETOs receive very little training in the preparation or delivery of training packages; hence, much depends on the quality of particular DETOs.

The Police Academy advise that the quality and training of DETOs has been raised as a concern by RETCs across the State. However, in general terms, the selection and training of DETOs is largely a regional responsibility and beyond the control of the FYC Program.

Several regional and district training staff felt that greater consistency in training could be achieved if the program had a standard package of training materials designed to assist the DETOs. The FYC Program staff are currently developing a training syllabus which will include directive training materials for DETOs.

In addition to developing a directive training syllabus, the FYC Program Unit is also planning to review the FYC Program in 1996. Part of the review will look at developing clear policy guidelines which contain definite statements about the standard of training expected in the regions. The Unit also hopes to identify various strategies that can be used by the regions to assist in maintaining consistency across all areas of the program.

PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES IN THE FIELD

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IMPACTED ON TRAINING?

One of the guiding philosophies of the FYC Program is to provide the FYC with on-the-job training in an operational environment where, in the words of a FYC Program staff member, 'real learning takes place'. However, difficulties can arise where the training needs of the FYC cannot be met due to an overriding emphasis being given to the operational requirements of policing a particular community.

There was broad agreement amongst regional and district staff that the ideal training environment for FYCs was a region where FYCs were surplus to operational requirements and located in a dedicated training district or division which had the ability to ensure that all of the requirements of the program can be achieved.

There were two key findings from the interviews conducted with FYC Program staff, and regional and district training staff:

- Some regions have found it difficult to fund, assign facilities to, or make personnel available for, training purposes. Although there is a strong commitment on the part of regional training staff to minimise the effect that operational considerations have on the training of FYCs, the program is seen by some police supervisors and managers as having a low priority.
- In some regions, training guidelines for FYCs can only be adhered to when operational conditions permit. For example, almost all of the RETCs and DETOs report having to continually remind Officers-in-Charge of stations about the requirements of the FYC Program, particularly in regards to rostering practices.

Another major problem area identified by regional and district training staff and FYC Program staff was the change of policy which allowed FYCs to be counted as part of a Division's/District's operational strength. This is a particularly important issue for two reasons. Firstly, placing FYCs in substantive positions erodes the pool of experienced police available at the station by blocking the opportunity for more experienced police to move into the vacant position. Secondly, and most importantly, allowing a FYC to occupy a vacant position has the potential to send the wrong "signal" to operational police. Once

included in the establishment of a particular unit or station, the Officer-in-Charge may tend to view the FYC as part of the staffing complement.

Regional and district training staff stated during the interviews that Training Centres are well aware that FYCs are not to be used to fill staff shortages. However, some regional training staff, particularly those located in the south, frankly admit that some Officers-in-Charge of stations tend to regard FYCs as an operational resource and routinely use them to supplement the station's complement. The FYC Program records provide several examples of the impact that operational requirements have had on the program:

- Two FYCs were unable to attend a training day because they were required to perform night duty.
- In one location, FYCs were required to perform duty in the Watchhouse on their own.
- One FYC did not attend a training day because the officer was scheduled to work an operational shift. Inquiries later revealed that the officer was not identified on the shift-roster as a FYC and the roster clerk was not aware of the FYCs training schedule.

The situation appears to have generally been kept in check by the monitoring strategies put in place to ensure compliance with FYC Program guidelines. However, there were some concerns expressed by those interviewed that if the close scrutiny was to cease, some regions might be inclined to deviate from the program guidelines to suit operational conditions. There was general agreement that it is essential for the FYC Program to have effective monitoring strategies to prevent the diversion of FYCs into mainstream operational policing before they are fully prepared.

The CJC has been informed that the QPS Human Resources Division is preparing a submission to QPS Board of Management for the July 1996 meeting, recommending that:

- FYCs be considered to be "surplus to the establishment" in all Divisions and Districts
- Divisional/District strengths be recalculated on the basis that FYCs are excluded from the operational strengths of the regions.

In practical terms, the submission recommends that the operational strength be recalculated to exclude FYCs and each Division be required to draw up rosters which do not rely on the availability of FYCs to supplement the operational strength of a Division/District. This would be a positive step forward for the program. However, it is very important that there be ongoing monitoring by FYC Program Staff to ensure that there is compliance with the policy.

HOW SUPPORTIVE HAVE THE REGIONS BEEN OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM?

Without exception, all of the regions expressed a high level of support for the program. The degree of support was particularly high amongst officers such as the RETCs, DETOs and FTOs, who are directly involved with the FYCs. In addition, all of the Assistant Commissioners interviewed for this evaluation expressed unreserved support for the program and committed their regions to providing the highest standard of training to FYCs.

The FYCs also provided a positive assessment of the support that had been provided to them during the program:

- Seventy-eight per cent reported that the Officers-in-Charge had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive'. Only one respondent indicated that the Officer-in-Charge had not been supportive at all.
- Ninety per cent indicated that their DETOs had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive'. Again, only one respondent stated that his/her DETO had not been supportive at all.
- Almost three-quarters stated that other senior officers had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive'.
- Ninety-three per cent of the respondents said that their FTOs had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive'.

HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES BEEN PROVIDED IN THE REGIONS?

An area of concern identified in the interviews related to the issue of whether the regions were providing the FYC Program with adequate resources. Most regional and district training staff interviewed for this evaluation felt that they did not have resources to "properly" deliver the FYC Program at the regional level.

The main areas of concern over resources were:

- the lack of training staff in the regions
- the need for access to a suitable training facilities in some areas
- availability of appropriate reference materials, e.g. relevant Acts, Operational Procedures Manuals, etc.

At the time of the interviews, some regions were experiencing a high turnover of training staff and a number of DETO positions were vacant. The problem seems particularly noticeable in the north, where one region reported that the ratio of training officers to sworn members is 1:130. This is substantially lower than in the south, where one region reported a ratio of one training officer for every 47 sworn members.

Another area of concern was the lack of adequate training facilities in some centres. Currently, most of the regional and district training staff use existing meeting rooms for training days or workshops. Adequate meeting space in some regions is scarce and training staff report that they often have to compete with other groups for access. This seems to be a greater problem for training staff located at smaller centres.

A third major resourcing issue concerns the availability of appropriate reference materials, such as various Acts and Operational Procedures Manuals. Regional and district training staff advised that very few police stations have appropriate sources of relevant information such as textbooks. Access to current Acts or Operational Procedures Manuals can sometimes also be difficult. During the interviews, one FTO even reported that an Officer-in-Charge of a station in his/her region kept all Operational Procedures Manuals under 'lock and key' and would only make them available during core business hours. It was felt by most that this problem would be rectified once the QPS provided "on-line" access to Acts and Operational Procedures Manuals via the new QPS Network.

In addition, regional and district training staff felt that library facilities in some regions are severely limited. This is seen as a major disadvantage to some FYCs who are located away from the major centres, or in locations where the FYC does not have access to a TAFE College or University library.

DELIVERY OF TRAINING

HOW WELL HAVE THE FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS PERFORMED THEIR TRAINING ROLE?

The FTO is an integral part of the FYC Program, as this officer is responsible for the initial operational training of a FYC. The function of an FTO is to provide assistance, instruction, supervision and support to the FYC throughout the training period. The quality and effectiveness of FTOs is of particular importance, given that this has been an issue in the past (see CJC 1993).

The average length of service for FTOs was 8.8 years and ranged from 2.5 to 23 years. Table 3 (below) shows the average length of service for FTOs broken down by region. With the exception of North Coast Region, there were no significant regional differences in the average length of service for FTOs.

**TABLE 3 – AVERAGE LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR
FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS BY REGION**

Region	Average Years Service
Northern	9
Central	7.8
North Coast	12.9
Metropolitan South	7.6
Metropolitan North	8.6
Southern	8
South Eastern	7.8
Far Northern	2.5 – 23 (a)

Source: FYC Program records, 1 April 1996

Note: (a) data supplied as a range in the number of years of service

There were some regional differences in the ratio of FYCs to FTOs. The Far Northern, Central and Northern Regions had ratios of FYCs to FTOs below 1:5. This is less than the statewide average of 1:6. The range varied from one FYC for 3.5 FTOs in Northern Region to one FYC to nine FTOs in Southern Region.

There appears to be no significant regional differences in the level of performance of FTOs. A review of FYC Program records shows a high level of satisfaction in all regions by FYC Program staff with the efforts of FTOs. In many cases, the FYC Program records contain remarks on the good quality of FTO reports and acknowledge the efforts being made by FTOs to provide quality feedback in relation to the development and assessment of FYCs.

Table 4 (below) shows regional differences in the ratio of FYCs to FTOs.

TABLE 4 – RATIO OF FIRST YEAR CONSTABLES TO FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS BY REGION

Region	FYCs to FTOs
Northern	1:3.5
Central	1:5
North Coast	1:8
Metropolitan South	1:6
Metropolitan North	1:5.6
Southern	1:9
South Eastern	1:6.7
Far Northern	1:4.8

Source: FYC Program records, 1 April 1996

The level of satisfaction with the efforts of the FTOs was also high amongst FYCs. In a survey conducted for this evaluation, the FYCs were asked to assess the performance of their FTOs (see appendix). Overall, the survey results indicate that the FYCs were happy with the training that they received from the FTO. The overwhelming majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their FTOs:

- were willing to help (99.3%)
- provided enough information for them to perform their tasks (98.3%)
- were experienced police officers (92.6%)
- presented information clearly (88%).

Although the general consensus amongst those interviewed for this evaluation was that the FTO concept was working well, there were some concerns raised by FYC Program training staff and regional training staff about:

- an erosion in the quality of FTOs
- FTO "burnout"
- the lack of recognition and training for FTOs.

In relation to the first point, some regions, particularly in the north, are reporting a substantial exit of experienced police (2–6 yrs service). This has been largely attributed to members moving on to other regions, or other opportunities such as special sections.

Several DETOs reported that some FTO's were close to "burnout". The DETOs attributed this to the fact that some regions have only a limited pool of FTOs and, as a result, some FTOs do not get a break from training. The current allocation model is designed to provide a means for the regions to predict future staffing trends and can be used to ensure that sufficient and suitable staff are available when FYCs are allocated to the Training Centres. However, in situations where recruiting rapidly accelerates or occurs in uneven "feast and famine" style intakes, the problem of FTO overuse, which ultimately contributes to "burnout" becomes more apparent.

Currently there is no recognition of FTOs for the work that they do. Therefore, many DETOs feel that there is no extrinsic motivation for a FTO to excel at what they do. Many of the FTOs themselves feel that the skills that they gain as a result of being a FTO can be used as evidence of supervisory experience for promotional purposes, but there is a sense that they receive no formal recognition for their efforts.

In most regions, the training course designed for FTOs consists of two days of seminars on various topics related to the FYC Program. However, one region has condensed the program down to one day. Many of the FTOs feel that the training course provides nothing more than a basic overview of the program. The strong view expressed by FTOs was that the training for FTOs should be substantially revised, centralised and standardised.

QUALITY OF TRAINING

HOW PREPARED ARE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLES FOR THEIR DUTIES AS POLICE OFFICERS AT THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLE PROGRAM?

Overall, most FYCs surveyed for this evaluation (see Appendix) felt that the FYC Program adequately prepared them for their duties as a police officer. For example:

- over 80 per cent 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they would be able to confidently perform their duties as police officers
- the majority of respondents (59%) 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their training was recognised as important by those who they worked with.

There were few regional differences in the FYCs' assessment of the training they received, with 95 per cent of FYCs reporting being 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the training they have received to date. However, the survey did find that respondents in North Coast, Southern and South Eastern Regions were more likely to be 'very satisfied' with their training than those in the rest of the State.

Respondents were also asked if they would like to make any changes to the FYC Program. Forty-nine per cent of FYCs said that they did not want to make any changes. Of those who said that they would like to see changes, no particular aspect of the program stood out. The responses included: "more operationally related training days" (7%); "changing the format of the mentor period" (3%); and "more criminal law procedure being taught in the program" (2%).

Overall, the general feeling amongst the FYCs, FYC Program staff and regional and district training staff was that the FYC Program does a good job in preparing the FYCs for operational policing duties. For example, one DETO considered that the program was very professionally managed and delivered in such a way that it provided recruits with almost everything they needed to know.

HAVE THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLES BEEN EXPOSED TO A SIMILAR RANGE OF TASKS AND SITUATIONS?

The change in allocation policy resulted in FYCs being exposed to very different work environments which, in part, are a reflection of the different communities being policed across Queensland. Hence, it was important to determine if the FYCs were being exposed to a similar range of tasks and situations.

In the survey, the FYCs were asked to report on the range of policing experience they had obtained during the FYC Program. Generally the FYCs had a much higher exposure to reactive policing tasks than to pro-active community-based police work. For example, only about 25 per cent of FYCs reported having experience in working with the community, whereas all of the FYCs reported having undertaken Random Breath Testing (see Appendix). This is likely a reflection of the reality of general duties policing, as well as the emphasis that both the PROVE program and the FYC Program placed on preparing FYCs for operational policing duties.

Other tasks frequently undertaken by FYCs were those normally associated with routine patrolling, such as issuing Traffic Offence Notices (93%), dealing with domestic disputes (90%) and attending to noisy party complaints (76%). The only tasks where regional differences were noted were in relation to issuing warrants, dealing with domestic violence and issuing traffic offence notices:

- All respondents in North Coast, South Eastern, Southern, Metropolitan North and Metropolitan South Regions reported having had experience in issuing warrants. In comparison, 13 per cent of respondents from the Far Northern and Central Regions reported having no experience in issuing warrants.
- Respondents in Far Northern, Northern and Central Regions were more likely to have had 'a lot' or 'some' experience in dealing with domestic disputes, than respondents in the rest of the State. The data suggest that FYCs in Metropolitan North and Metropolitan South Regions dealt with fewer domestic disputes than FYCs in other regions.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents in the Far Northern, Northern and Central Regions stated that they had 'a lot' of experience in issuing Traffic Offence Notices, compared with less than 40 per cent in other regions.

The general assessment is that FYCs are being exposed to a broadly similar range of tasks, most of which arise out of responding to calls for service, or standard patrolling activities. Although there were slight regional differences, the vast majority of FYCs in all regions reported at least 'some' experience with the list of various operational policing tasks.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the evaluation identified few significant differences between northern and southern regions in terms of the delivery of the FYC Program. Where the quality of the program and its delivery varied, the differences reflected the challenge of delivering a field-based training program in areas of high workload, relatively junior staff and general staffing problems. Some regions face these difficulties to a greater extent than others.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the evaluation are:

- FYC Program staff and regional and district training staff were generally satisfied with the way that the allocation of FYCs has been handled under the new policy. However, a substantial number of FYCs felt that the change in policy was not handled well.
- Almost all of the regional and district training staff felt that the FYC Program was well supervised. However, some training staff located in the northern regions perceived that regions in the south-east corner of the State have better access to FYC Program staff.
- Although consistency of training is continually improving, the standard of training tends to vary from region to region. One reason for this may be the lack of training that some DETOs have in the preparation or delivery of training packages. A second factor is the lack of a standard package of training materials designed to assist the DETOs.
- Some regions are finding it exceedingly difficult to fund, assign facilities to, or make personnel available for training purposes. Although there is a strong commitment on the part of regional staff to minimise the effect that operational considerations have on the training of FYCs, the program is seen by some police supervisors and managers as having a low priority.
- Some regions, particularly in the south, tend to regard FYCs as an operational resource and routinely use them to supplement a station's complement. The situation is being kept in check, to a large extent, by the current monitoring strategies put in place to ensure compliance with FYC Program guidelines.
- Some regions are experiencing a high turnover of training staff. The problem seems particularly noticeable in the north, where the ratio of training officers to sworn members is significantly lower than in some of the southern regions.
- DETOs from the smaller centres reported a lack of adequate training facilities. Currently, most regional and district training staff use existing meeting rooms for training days. Suitable meeting space is often scarce and training staff report that they have to compete with other groups for access.
- There were no significant regional differences in the average length of service for FTOs and the level of performance of FTOs. However, northern regions have substantially fewer FTOs available to train FYCs than regions located in the south. Because of the limited pool of FTOs, some FYCs have been described as being close to "burnout". The problem may get worse as the number of FYCs increases.
- FTOs generally feel that they are not properly trained and that they do not receive any formal recognition for the work that they do. The strong view expressed by FTOs was that their training should be substantially revised, centralised and standardised.
- Overall, the general consensus amongst the FYCs, FYC Program staff and regional and district training staff was that the FYC Program does a very good job in preparing the FYCs for operational policing duties.

- There were few regional differences in the range of policing experiences that FYCs receive during the FYC Program. The only major differences were that FYCs allocated to northern regions report having a greater exposure to domestic violence and traffic enforcement related activities, whereas FYCs located to southern regions have a greater involvement in issuing warrants and traffic control activities.
- During the program FYCs have a much higher exposure to reactive policing tasks than to proactive community-based police work. This is likely a reflection of the reality of general duties policing, as well as a consequence of the emphasis that both the PROVE program and the FYC Program have placed on preparing FYCs for operational policing duties.

ISSUES REQUIRING ATTENTION

This evaluation has identified few significant differences between northern and southern regions in terms of the consistency of training and the delivery of the FYC Program. However, attention needs to be given to the following matters:

- Improving the level of knowledge that FYCs have about the allocation process. Reviewing how allocation decisions are communicated to both the regions and FYCs would increase the level of FYC satisfaction with the allocation process.
- Putting strategies in place to enhance the level of support provided by the FYC Program to all regions, including those located in the north. Particular emphasis should be placed on ensuring that all regions have equitable access to FYC Program staff.
- Developing appropriate monitoring strategies to prevent the diversion of FYCs into mainstream policing before they are fully prepared, and to ensure that the FYC Program guidelines are being complied with to the greatest extent possible.
- Defining FYCs as “surplus” to operational requirements, as proposed by the QPS Human Resources Division.
- Reviewing the way that DETOs and FTOs are recruited, selected, trained and rewarded to ensure that regions have sufficient numbers of quality training staff to properly deliver the program.
- Developing a standardised package of appropriate “directive” training materials to assist the DETOs in the delivery of the program to maintain consistency in training outcomes.

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

RESULTS OF THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLE SURVEYS (1994 RECRUIT INTAKES)

INTRODUCTION

This appendix briefly summarises the results of the surveys administered in 1995 to three cohorts of FYCs. The three groups surveyed were the:

- January 1994 recruit intake (the questionnaire was administered by mail in July/August 1995, about ten months into the FYC Program)¹
- May 1994 recruit intake (the questionnaire was administered by mail in October/November 1995, about ten months into the FYC Program)
- October 1994 recruit intake (the questionnaire was administered at the Academy in December 1995, about six months into the FYC Program).

Over three-quarters of FYCs in each group responded to the questionnaire (76% or 41 of the January 1994 intake; 77% or 59 of the May 1994 intake; 91% or 100 of the October 1994 intake). The characteristics of the respondents are summarised in Table A1.

TABLE A1 – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	January cohort (%)	May cohort (%)	October cohort (%)
Region where FYCs working			
Far Northern/Northern	22 (9)	37 (22)	27 (26)
North Coast/Southern/South Eastern	39 (16)	31 (18)	41 (40)
Metro North/Metro South	39 (16)	32 (19)	33 (32)
Gender			
Female	24 (10)	40 (23)	28 (27)
Male	76 (31)	60 (35)	72 (69)
Age group			
Under 25 years	56 (22)	52 (30)	48 (47)
Between 25 and 35 years	38 (15)	41 (24)	44 (43)
35 years or over	5 (2)	7 (4)	8 (8)
Highest education level			
Secondary	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (9)
Some post-secondary	100 (41)	100 (58)	91 (89)

Source: FYC surveys.

Notes:

1. Some respondents did not answer all questions.
2. The percentages have been rounded up.
3. Ns are presented in brackets.

¹ The results of this survey were summarised in *Briefing Note: Summary of Results. First Year Constable Survey (July/August 1995)*.

For the following reasons caution should be exercised when interpreting the results of the surveys,

- The policy change regarding the allocation of FYCs resulted in some FYCs in the January cohort being re-allocated half-way through their training.
- The October cohort were surveyed after six months, while the January and May cohorts were surveyed later in their training.
- Due to the relatively small sample sizes of the surveys, generally differences of around 20 per cent between cohorts are required before we can be reasonably confident that the differences actually exist, and are not artefacts of the sample.
- Assessing regional differences from the results are also difficult, due to the relatively small numbers of FYCs surveyed. As a result, the January and May cohorts have been combined in the regional analysis.²

ASSESSMENT OF THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLE PROGRAM

The FYCs were asked about their general experiences in the FYC Program. Overall, the respondents in each cohort gave fairly favourable assessments of the program (see Table A2). For instance:

- Most reported being 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the training they have received to date in the FYC Program (95% January cohort; 86% May cohort; 92% October cohort).
- Over 80 per cent 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they could now confidently perform their duties (88% January cohort; 95% May cohort; 86% October cohort).
- The majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the training days were valuable (71% January cohort; 54% May cohort; 83% October cohort). However, there was a substantial proportion of respondents in the May cohort who were not sure (27%).

The proportion of respondents who 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their training was recognised as important by those that they worked with decreased with each cohort (59% January 1994 intake; 58% May 1994 intake; 44% October 1994 intake).

² The October cohort was not included in this analysis because the survey was administered at a different stage of the FYC Program.

TABLE A2 – RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF THE FIRST YEAR CONSTABLE PROGRAM

	% of respondents who 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed'		
	January cohort	May cohort	October cohort
I can now perform my duties confidently	88 (36)	95 (55)	86 (85)
My training was recognised as important by those that I worked with	59 (24)	58 (34)	44 (43)
The compulsory training days were valuable	71 (29)	54 (32)	83 (81)
The time spent in the "mentor" period was too short	20 (8)	24 (14)	33 (32)
The FYC Program is not tied into what I learnt at the Academy	20 (8)	17 (10)	11 (11)

Source: FYC surveys.

Notes:

1. Respondents were asked: 'Listed below are some statements about the First Year Constable Program. Based on your *general* experiences with the program over the last ten months, do you agree or disagree with each of them?'
2. Percentages are rounded up.
3. Ns for each category are given in brackets.

Respondents were also asked if they would like to make any changes to the FYC Program. Forty-one per cent of respondents in the January cohort, 63 per cent in the May cohort and 43 per cent in the October cohort suggested changes. However, no particular feature stood out as a problem. Table A3 which lists the most common responses for each cohort.

TABLE A3 – MAIN CHANGES SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS (UNPROMPTED)

January cohort (n=17)	May cohort (n=37)	October cohort (n=42)
1. More operationally relevant training (3)	1. More criminal law and procedures (3) 2. More operationally related training (3) 3. Longer mentor period (2)	1. Less interpersonal communications/skills (3) 2. Longer mentor period (3) 3. More criminal law and procedures (2) 4. Increase numbers of experienced FTOs (2) 5. More practical skills training (2)

Source: FYC surveys.

Notes:

1. Respondents were asked: 'If you could change *one* feature of the program, what would you change?'
2. Ns are given in brackets.
3. In the January cohort, all other categories attracted one respondent.

RANGE OF POLICING TASKS

The FYCs were asked to report on the amount and range of policing experience they had obtained during the FYC Program. Their responses are summarised in Table A4. As the October cohort was surveyed earlier in their training than the January and May groups, the results cannot be directly compared.

Most respondents reported having:

- undertaken random breath testing (100% January cohort; 100% May cohort)
- issued traffic offence notices (93% January cohort; 98% May cohort)
- handled drink driving offenders (95% January cohort; 93% May cohort)
- dealt with domestic disputes (90% January cohort; 83% May cohort)
- dealt with street incidents (90% January cohort; 80% may cohort)
- dealt with noisy parties (76% January cohort; 85% May cohort)
- obtained witness statements (93% January cohort; 81% May cohort).

As can be seen, the tasks undertaken most frequently by FYCs are those that arise out of responding to calls for service, or standard patrolling activities. Only one-fifth of the January cohort said that they had had experience in working with the community; this was slightly higher for the May cohort (37%). These results suggest that proactive policing has a lower priority than reactive policing activities in the training of FYCs.

TABLE A4 – RANGE OF TASKS

Task	% of respondents reporting 'a lot' or 'some'		
	Jan. cohort	May cohort	Oct. cohort*
Dealing with noisy parties	76 (31)	85 (50)	59 (59)
Dealing with street incidents	90 (37)	80 (47)	67 (67)
Conducting random breath tests	100 (41)	100 (59)	99 (99)
Dealing with domestic disputes	90 (37)	83 (49)	74 (73)
Controlling traffic	71 (29)	80 (47)	69 (69)
Issuing warrants	59 (24)	59 (35)	44 (44)
Working with the community	20 (8)	37 (22)	26 (26)
Issuing Traffic Offence Notices	93 (38)	98 (58)	86 (86)
Handling drink driving offenders	95 (39)	93 (55)	95 (94)
Giving evidence in court	32 (13)	22 (13)	17 (17)
Obtaining statements from witnesses	93 (38)	81 (48)	74 (73)

Source: FYC surveys.

Notes: The October cohort were surveyed at an earlier stage of the FYC Program, so the amount and range of policing experience cannot be directly compared to the results from the January and May cohorts.

1. Respondents were asked: 'During the last six/ten months in the field, how much experience have you had performing the following policing tasks?'
2. Percentages are rounded up.
3. Ns for each category are given in brackets.

ASSESSMENT OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

The FYCs in the January and May cohorts were asked to specify how many FTOs they had been assigned to during the first ten months of the FYC Program. Over 66 per cent of the January cohort and 42 per cent of the May cohort reported having worked with 20 or more FTOs throughout the FYC Program. At the six-months stage, around 14 per cent of the October cohort indicated that they had worked with 20 or more FTOs *once they had completed the mentor component of the program*.

The FYCs were also asked to assess the performance of their FTOs (see Table A5). Again, the respondents were favourable in their assessments. The overwhelming majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their FTOs:

- were willing to help (100% in the January cohort; 100% May cohort; 98% October cohort)
- provided enough information for them to perform their tasks (100% January cohort; 98% May cohort; 97% October cohort)
- were experienced police officers (98% January cohort; 92% May cohort; 92% October cohort)
- presented information clearly (88% January cohort; 90% May cohort; 86% October cohort).

Over 85 per cent of respondents in each cohort felt that their FTOs differed in the way they performed policing tasks. A clear majority also agreed that standards differed between FTOs (78% January cohort; 63% May cohort; 66% October cohort). This is not surprising given that respondents reported working with relatively large numbers of FTOs.

However, the results suggest that the level of feedback provided by the FTOs to the FYCs on their performance may have recently fallen. Twenty-eight per cent of the October cohort strongly disagreed or disagreed that the FTOs provided feedback, whereas only five per cent in the January cohort disagreed with this statement.

Overall, the results indicate that the FYCs were happy with the training that they were receiving.

TABLE A5 – RESPONDENTS’ ASSESSMENT OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

	% who ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’		
	<i>Jan cohort</i>	<i>May cohort</i>	<i>Oct cohort</i>
Were willing to help	100 (41)	100 (59)	98 (98)
Provided enough information for the FYCs to perform his/her tasks	100 (41)	98 (58)	97 (97)
Were experienced police officers	98 (40)	92 (54)	92 (92)
Differed in the way they performed policing tasks	90 (37)	85 (50)	90 (90)
Presented information clearly	88 (36)	90 (53)	86 (86)
Standards differed between FTOs	78 (32)	63 (37)	66 (66)
Provided feedback to FYC on his/her performance	81 (33)	78 (46)	60 (60)

Source: FYC surveys.

Notes:

1. Respondents were asked: ‘How well do the following statements describe your overall experiences with your FTOs?’
2. Percentages are rounded up.
3. Ns for each category are given in brackets.

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY OTHER OFFICERS

The FYCs were asked to indicate the level of support that had been provided to them during their FYC Program by senior officers. The respondents were generally positive in their responses:

- the majority of respondents reported that the officers-in-charge at their station had been ‘very supportive’ or ‘supportive’ (78% in January 1994 cohort; 72% in the May 1994 cohort; and 60% in the October 1994 cohort)
- most indicated that their District Education and Training Officers (DETOs) had been ‘very supportive’ or ‘supportive’ (90% in the January cohort; 88% in the May cohort; 89% in the October cohort)

- over 60 per cent indicated that other senior officers had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive' (71% in the January cohort; 68% in the May cohort; 63% in the October cohort)
- almost all of the respondents said that their FTOs had been 'very supportive' or 'supportive' (93% in the January cohort; 92% in the May cohort; 90% in the October cohort).

Few of the respondents reported that other officers had 'not been supportive at all'.

ALLOCATION OF FIRST YEAR CONSTABLES TO REGIONS

The respondents were asked generally about how FYCs were allocated to regions:

- Around one-fifth of respondents in each cohort reported that they had not wanted to be assigned to their current regions (17% January cohort; 19% May cohort; 17% October cohort).
- A substantial proportion of FYCs reported that the allocation process had not been managed well (32% January cohort; 52% May cohort; 33% October cohort). As these results show, respondents in the May cohort were particularly dissatisfied with this aspect.
- The most commonly suggested methods for improving the allocation process were to:
 - allow the FYCs to have greater input in the process (four FYCs or 12% of respondents in the January cohort; six FYCs or 10% of respondents in the May cohort; five FYCs or 5% of respondents in the October cohort)
 - provide more notice of the decision to FYCs (6 FYCs or 10% of respondents in the May 1994 intake; eight FYCs or 8% of respondents in the October 1994 intake).³
- The majority of respondents reported that they would now like to remain in their current region after completing the FYC Program (71% January cohort; 78% May cohort; 59% October cohort). Of the small number of FYCs who indicated that they would like to move to another region, the most popular choice was to be in the south-east corner (six out of eight respondents in the January cohort; seven out of nine in the May cohort; 13 out of 21 in the October cohort).

REGIONAL COMPARISONS

In general, there were few regional differences in the respondents' assessments of the training received. Table A6 shows the main regional differences that were statistically significant. For this analysis, the January and May cohorts were combined due to the small sample sizes. However, the results need to be interpreted cautiously because there were still small counts in some categories.

³ Only one respondent in the January cohort was in this category.

TABLE A6 – MAIN REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

	Far Northern/ Northern/ Central	North Coast/ Southern/South Eastern	Metro North/ Metro South
Satisfaction with training	10% very satisfied 81% satisfied --- not sure 10% dissatisfied (N=31)	38% very satisfied 50% satisfied 3% not sure 9% dissatisfied (N=34)	11% very satisfied 80% satisfied 6% not sure 3% dissatisfied (N=35)
Number of FTOs	19% up to 10 27% 10-19 35% 20-29 12% 30-39 8% 40 or more (N=26)	16% up to 10 53% 10-19 13% 20-29 3% 30-39 16% 40 or more (N=32)	33% up to 10 57% 10-19 7% 20-29 3% 30-39 --- 40 or more (N=30)
Experience Obtained			
Dealing with domestic disputes	58% a lot 42% some --- not very much (N=31)	65% a lot 24% some 12% not very much (N=34)	23% a lot 49% some 29% not very much (N=35)
Issuing warrants	13% a lot 39% some 36% not very much 13% none at all (N=31)	3% a lot 53% some 44% not very much --- none at all (N=34)	20% a lot 49% some 31% not very much --- none at all (N=35)
Issuing Traffic Offence Notices	77% a lot 23% some (N=31)	38% a lot 59% some 3% not very much (N=34)	34% a lot 57% some 9% not very much (N=35)

Source: FYC Survey.

Notes:

1. Respondents were asked: 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the training you've received so far in the First Year Constable Program?'; 'About how many Field Training Officers (FTOs) have you had...?'; 'During the last ten months in the field, how much experience have you had performing the following policing tasks?'
2. Percentages have been rounded up.
3. Significant regional differences were identified using a chi-square test. For technical reasons, this test may over-estimate the extent of regional differences.

The main findings are:

- More respondents in North Coast, Southern and South Eastern regions were 'very satisfied' with their training, than in the rest of the State (10% and 11%). However, most respondents in all regions reported that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their training so far.
- Respondents in metropolitan Brisbane reported having worked with fewer FTOs than respondents in other locations.
- Respondents in Far Northern, Northern and Central regions were more likely to have had 'a lot' or 'some' experience in dealing with domestic disputes, than respondents in the rest of the State. The

data suggests that FYCs in Metro North and Metro South regions have dealt with fewer domestic disputes during the FYC Program.

- All respondents in Far Northern, Northern and Central regions reported having had 'a lot' or 'some' experience in issuing traffic offence notices. In the other regions, the responses were more spread.

SUMMARY

The overwhelming majority of FYCs were generally satisfied with the training they had received in the FYC Program. The respondents made several favourable assessments of the program, including:

- most felt that they could confidently perform their duties
- most assessed their FTOs very positively
- the majority reported that senior officers, DETOs and other officers had been supportive during the FYC Program
- although some changes to the program were suggested by respondents, no particular feature was identified as a problem.

FYCs had a much higher exposure to reactive policing tasks than to proactive, community-based policing work.

However, there was substantial dissatisfaction expressed by the FYCs about the way in which they were allocated to regions. The most commonly suggested methods for improving the allocation process were: to allow FYCs to have greater input in the process and to provide more notice of the decision to FYCs.

Few significant regional differences in the quality of the training (as assessed by the respondents) could be identified.

