Sections 26 and 28 of the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014* set out the functions of the QFCC to help reduce the likelihood of child deaths. These functions include to:

- allow genuine researchers to access information in the register to undertake research to help reduce the likelihood of child deaths
- conduct research, alone or in cooperation with other entities
- identify areas for further research
- make recommendations, arising from keeping the register and conducting research, about laws, policies, practices and services.

During 2016–17 the QFCC has continued to concentrate its efforts on maintaining the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the child death information in the register and meeting the legislated requirement to report annually. Collecting, analysing and publishing information on the causes of child deaths is an important step in preventing child deaths and serious injuries.

The QFCC responds to researcher requests for child death data, contributes to death and injury prevention initiatives and maintains involvement in relevant advisory bodies.

During 2016–17 the QFCC has also used its social media platforms, especially Talking Families and Keep Kids Safe, to distribute prevention messages to the community. For example, social media was used to share a video animation outlining key prevention messages in relation to swimming safety in backyard pools.
RESEARCHER ACCESS TO CHILD DEATH DATA

The QFCC, through its strategy of providing access to data from the Queensland Child Death Register, supported a range of researchers and stakeholders during the reporting period in the development and implementation of programs, policies, initiatives and research programs which require a solid and contemporary evidence base. The overarching aim of this strategy is to promote the information collected in the Queensland Child Death Register to stakeholders (at both the state and national levels), identify opportunities to engage with stakeholders and share the child death dataset and key findings to inform ongoing prevention efforts.

The Queensland Child Death Register may be accessed at no cost by organisations or individuals conducting genuine research.57 Stakeholders wishing to access the register to support their research, policy or program initiatives can email their request to child_death_prevention@qfcc.qld.gov.au.

During 2016–17, the QFCC responded to 17 requests for access to the child death register from external stakeholders. Table 9.1 provides an overview of the type of data requested in 2016–17 and the purpose for which it was used. Examples of the projects provided with information include the following:

- Victorian *inquest into the drowning death of a child* was provided with information on Queensland trends in pool drownings and changes in pool fencing laws. The inquest recommendations have led to new pool fencing laws being introduced in Victoria.

- Low-speed vehicle run-over data were provided to RACQ and were used in an RACQ education campaign *Driveway run overs can turn holidays into tragedies* which was released in April 2017.

- A Lady Cilento Hospital researcher was provided with suicide and other non-intentional injury data. This data was used in an opinion piece by T Gillen, *Approaches to teen suicide: What nurses can do to understand and prevent youth suicide*, published in Nursing Review.

- The Royal Life Saving Society of Australia was provided with data on child drowning to support national reporting and a number of research projects:
  - Royal Life Saving national drowning report 2016.
  - Reducing drowning deaths in children aged 0–14 years.

- United Synergies was provided with suicide data to inform a proposal for ‘inCare’ suicide prevention.

- Suicide postvention in schools was supported through providing Suspected Suicide Notifications to the Department of Education and Training. Detailed research data are also provided to inform practice in schools and provide further evidence for the need to pay particular attention to known risk factors for mental health concerns and suicide.

- Information on ways children who had drowned had accessed a swimming pool was provided to support discussion of the National Standards Committee (private swimming pools).

- Queensland data on child deaths was collated with data from all Australian jurisdictions to inform the National Children’s Commissioner Megan Mitchell’s investigation of issues faced by young parents and their children. The findings of the young parent project will form part of the 2017 *Children’s Rights Report*.

- Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit was provided with data to inform their exploratory review of sudden unexpected deaths in infancy (SUDI) to explore whether a chin-to-chest position may have been associated with SUDI deaths.

- Data was provided to the University of the Sunshine Coast for their ongoing study examining SUDI records in order to better understand risk factors and identify ways to better support vulnerable, marginalised, difficult-to-engage groups through risk-reduction education.

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57 Genuine research is defined as research relating to childhood mortality or morbidity with a view to increasing knowledge of incidence, causes and risk factors relating to same. Genuine research includes policy and program initiatives to reduce child death or injury.
Table 9.1: Purpose of data request by type of data requested 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of data requested</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Public education/reporting</th>
<th>Policy/program</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudden unexpected deaths in infancy (SUDI)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drowning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product-related injury</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All deaths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate residents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known to the child safety system</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: QFCC Register of child death data requests (2016–17)

**RESEARCH FINDINGS SUPPORTED THROUGH CHILD DEATH DATA**

Data provided from QFCC’s child death register has supported research in a number of fields of child death and injury prevention, leading to the following published findings:


**POLICY SUBMISSIONS**

QFCC used information in the Queensland child death register to support submissions as follows:

- A submission to the Implementation Plan Advisory Group (IPAG) Consultation 2017 regarding the next Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023 recommended the Pepi-Pods program, currently being rolled out in Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, be considered as part of a national campaign to reduce SUDI deaths.
- Submissions were made to Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) reviews of mandatory safety standards and the QFCC made recommendations regarding standards for:
  - children’s toys
  - baby bath aids
  - swimming and flotation aids
  - disposable cigarette lighters
- QFCC also recommended to the ACCC that mandatory safety standards be introduced for baby slings.
RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

The QFCC has several partnerships to progress child death prevention initiatives. These are:

- Research on childhood suicides – QFCC will provide data to the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research. This study is examining the characteristics and risk factors present in childhood suicides.
- Reviewing and classifying SUDI autopsies – QFCC will provide data to the University of the Sunshine Coast. This project will involve expert review of SUDI autopsies in order to inform the investigation and certification of infant deaths.

ADVISORY BODIES

The QFCC participated on a number of advisory bodies including:

- **Australian and New Zealand Child Death Review and Prevention Group (ANZCDR&PG)**
  ANZCDR&PG aims to identify, address and potentially decrease the number of infant, child and youth deaths by sharing information on issues in the review and reporting of child deaths. The group is working towards achieving national standardised reporting.

- **Consumer Product Injury Research Advisory Group**
  This group provides an evidence base to support product safety policy decisions which may include: recommending new mandatory standards or Australian Standards be developed; recommending certain unsafe products be banned; developing consumer or business education campaigns; and supporting research opportunities. This group also provides advice to relevant government, private and community agencies; media; and the larger community on product safety issues either proactively or as requested.

- **Queensland Suicide Prevention Reference Group**
  This group supports the implementation of the Queensland Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2015–17 and provides leadership, oversight and coordination of suicide prevention and risk-reduction activities undertaken across the state.

- **Queensland Advisory Group on Suicide Information and Data**
  This group provides expertise on systemic issues and data and other relevant evidence.

- **Queensland Government Births and Deaths Working Group**
  The Queensland Government Births and Deaths Working Group is a forum for discussing statistical and other issues around Queensland births and deaths registrations and assists in improving the quality and reliability of Queensland population statistics.