**Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team System Response Protocol – Children Missing from Out-of-Home Care (OOHC)**

**Recommendation:**
Child Safety Services amends the SCAN team system to reflect required responses to missing children from OOHC.

**Purpose:**
To enable a coordinated, multi-agency response to a child missing from OOHC.

**Definition of missing:**
A missing child is any child whose location is unknown and there are fears for the safety or concern for the welfare of that child. This protocol applies when a child is missing from OOHC and has been reported to the Queensland Police Service (QPS), as per the Queensland Government Protocol for Joint Agency Response to When a Child in Care is Missing.

**ACTIONS**
1. The relevant Child Safety staff member must immediately notify the local Service Support Officer (commonly referred to as a SCAN Coordinator) via phone or email.
   - The Child Safety Service Centre (CSSC) staff member must then complete the ‘Request for multiagency meeting’ (SCAN team referral) form, or ‘Review Form’ if the case is already open to the SCAN team.
   - If the SCAN Coordinator is unavailable (for example they work part-time or are away on leave) an appropriate proxy must be nominated by Child Safety.
2. Following notification that a child in OOHC is missing, the SCAN Coordinator immediately notifies all relevant SCAN team core members via telephone or email. This may occur before the referral is formally received.
   - The SCAN Coordinator distributes the ‘Request for multiagency meeting form’ or ‘Review Form’ and adds the matter to the agenda of the next scheduled SCAN team meeting.
   - The SCAN team core members will record relevant information on the Additional Information Form or Review Form.
   - The core members will provide the SCAN Coordinator with the Additional Information Form or Review Form prior to the scheduled meeting or emergency SCAN team meeting.
   - The SCAN Coordinator will circulate these documents to the other core members on receipt.
3. If no SCAN team meeting is scheduled within two days of the child being reported missing to QPS, the SCAN Coordinator will consult with the SCAN team core member representatives (including Child Safety) to determine if an emergency SCAN team meeting is required.
   - An emergency SCAN team meeting will occur if at least one SCAN team core member representative considers it necessary.
4. If determined that an emergency SCAN team meeting is required, the SCAN Coordinator must proceed in accordance with the Information Coordination Meeting (ICM) and SCAN Team System Manual.
   • If a SCAN team core member representative is unavailable (for example they work part-time or are away on leave) an appropriate proxy must be nominated by the relevant agency.
   • Attendance of any relevant stakeholders will be the responsibility of SCAN team core members to identify in accordance with the ICM and SCAN Team System Manual.

➢ If the child is located prior to the emergency SCAN team meeting being held, the referral will be discussed at the next scheduled SCAN team meeting and the emergency SCAN team meeting cancelled.
➢ At each SCAN team meeting, the SCAN team will review all children who have been missing, or missing and found, in the period between the previous SCAN team meeting. The purpose of the discussion will be to determine opportunities to address the reasons why the child may be frequently missing and recommend what further action (if any) needs to be taken. This includes a decision to close the case or keep it open.

Note: In line with the SCAN Team System Manual, Emergency SCAN team meetings can only be convened on business days (e.g. a child missing on Friday afternoon will have a meeting on Monday). Therefore, the Child Missing from OOHC SCAN Team System Response Protocol does not apply to the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre. Urgent discussions between agencies will continue to occur outside of business hours as required.