



Inspection of Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania, 2018 - Custody Inspection report

The report into Tasmania's adult custodial system was tabled in Parliament today by the Minister for Corrections, The Hon Elise Archer MP.

Custodial Inspector Mr Richard Connock said the inspection, carried out in February and March 2018, focused on all areas of adult custody in accordance with the Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania.

“The Custody Inspection Report includes a comprehensive review of the practices, procedures and operations of the five Tasmanian adult custodial centres including admissions, prisoner treatment and classification, infrastructure and design, security, prisoner transport, use of force, separate confinement and emergency management,” said Mr Connock.

“A number of evidence sources were used to assess each centre against the inspection standards ranging from on-site visits, meeting with senior management and staff, individual interviews with staff and prisoners, group discussions with prisoners, documentation review and observations by inspectors and experts,” he said.

“Inspection standards are based on international human rights standards and cover matters considered essential to the safe, respectful and purposeful treatment of prisoners

in custody,” he said.

“As a result of the inspection, 90 detailed recommendations have been made to the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS),” said Mr Connock.

Mr Connock said the recommendations highlight significant areas of concern ranging from ageing infrastructure, the prisoner classification scheme and lockdowns through to disciplinary processes and reporting.

“Infrastructure and facilities were identified as problematic across the service impacting on operational performance. Specifically, two facilities were deemed ‘not fit for purpose in the modern age’ being Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison and Launceston Reception Prison. The need for separate accommodation for remand prisoners is also evident,” said Mr Connock.

“Resourcing issues across the TPS were also significant with staffing, operational procedures and lack of regular training having a direct impact on prisoner behaviour management.”

“The impact of lockdowns on prisoners was identified by the report as severe and wide-ranging limiting reintegration and rehabilitation activities with staff shortages contributing to the high frequency of lockdowns,” said Mr Connock.

“Often prisoners are not able to be in the open air for at least an hour each day as provided in the Corrections Act 1997.”

“The inspection also noted that the prisoner classification scheme and separate confinement appear to be the preferred methods to manage challenging prisoner behaviour where alternative strategies could be applied,” he said.

The response by the Department of Justice to each recommendation can be found in the Custody Inspection Report as Appendix 2.

Mr Connock acknowledged the commitment by the Tasmanian State Government to improve conditions and standards of the state prison system.

“Since completion of the inspection, some recommendations have already been

implemented and addressed by the Department of Justice and Tasmania Prison Service,” Mr Connock outlined.

“The Tasmanian Government is aware of the current standard of the custodial system and the investment in the Southern Remand Centre (Risdon) and a new adult custodial facility in the north will be critical in addressing some of the recommendations in the Custody Inspection Report,’ he said. “These are not short term options and will take some years to be fully implemented.”

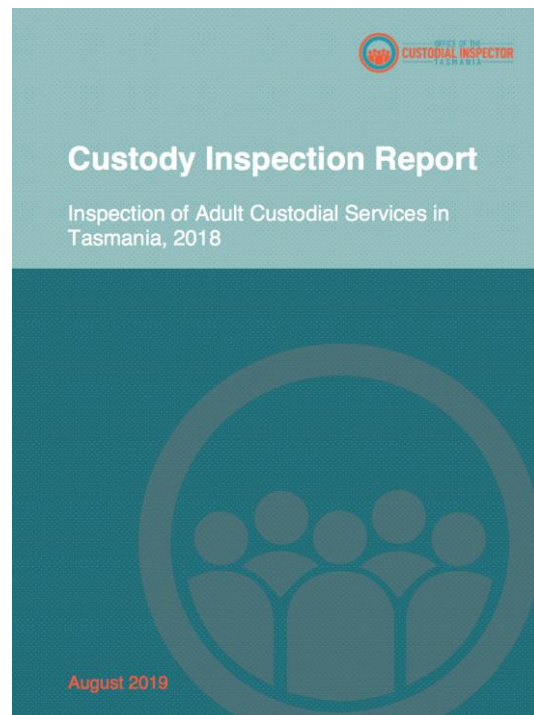
“New infrastructure will certainly be welcomed to alleviate concerns raised in this report but there are also a number of procedural and operational issues that need urgent attention,” he said.

Custody Inspection Report

Inspection of Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania, 2018 including:

- Risdon Prison Complex
- Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison
- Mary Hutchinson's Women's Prison
- Hobart Reception Prison
- Launceston Reception Prison

The inspection standards relating to Custody are directed to the treatment of prisoners and conditions in which they are kept while in custody.



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