



Corrective Services Commissioner's Opening Address

10 February 2020

Update Report on the Corruption and Crime Commission's 2018 Recommendations to the Department of Justice

Good morning Commissioner,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to make this opening statement.

As Commissioner of Corrective Services, I will provide an overview of the work that has been done to address the recommendations arising from the six reports issued by the Commission in 2018.

The Department of Justice has formally accepted all recommendations.

During this hearing, the Executive Director of Professional Standards will detail changes to the way the Department now manages and conducts investigations.

And the Director General will provide an overall perspective on the way in which misconduct and corruption is being addressed by the Department of Justice in its entirety.

I would like to say from the outset that much has changed for the better in the past 15 months and I believe we have made genuine progress to address the Commission's concerns.

There is no doubt that more needs to be done.

You will see from materials provided to the Commission that some of the work being undertaken to address the recommendations is, frankly speaking, taking longer than I would have liked.

But if I may, I will now highlight some of the gains we *have* made.

Corrective Services recognised the need to revise, consolidate and simplify what had been described as its inadequate and outdated policies and procedures.

I initiated the Custodial Operational Policies and Procedures Project to review more than 2000 existing operational instruments and develop and implement a clear, concise and consistent *new* set of instructions so that corrections staff know precisely what is required of them.

The project will result in the consolidation of 290 Corrective Services policies into 125 and 1900 local operating policies and procedures into approximately 850 local Standing Orders.

More than half of those now developed Commissioner's Operating Policy and Procedures have been approved.

This has been a complex project and there have been some unexpected delays.

That said, three prioritised and high-risk operational policies regarding searching, incident reporting and use of force are scheduled for implementation by May 2020.

\$1.4 million dollars was allocated to Phase 1 and 2 of the project being the scoping and development stages. Phase 3, the implementation stage, has commenced and involves the creation of local Standing Orders, staff training and awareness initiatives and system changes and improvements.

The project will be subject to an ongoing review process to adapt to changing circumstances and I have instructed the project team to remain in place until the new framework has been successfully implemented across all prisons.

Meanwhile, Corrective Services has initiated ongoing assessment of every Use of Force in all prisons for compliance with existing policies and procedures, particularly around incident reporting.

Training has been enhanced to provide greater emphasis on the actions of officers prior to, during and following Use of Force on prisoners. Further work is being undertaken regarding the requirement and timing for refresher training.

I would like to note that we have identified that Hakea prison has not been complying with the current policy of ensuring all Use of Force are reviewed in a timely manner.

They had failed to send the reviews to the central Use of Force committee for further oversight. I have now assigned two staff full time at Hakea prison to review all outstanding Use of Force and the local committee will also meet twice weekly to ensure future compliance.

While policy changes have been progressing, Corrective Services has also taken significant steps to minimise the risk of drugs and contraband from entering prisons in accordance with the WA Prison Drug Strategy 2018-2020.

Initiatives include a review of the drug prevalence testing program, the introduction of waste-water drug monitoring, improved staff drug and alcohol testing and the enhanced use of intelligence to conduct targeted operations.

Revised legislative changes for Penalties and sanctions for trafficking drugs have been submitted and staffing and resources for the Drug Detection Unit have been increased.

There have been improvements to prisoner drug education programs and transitional support to assist successful reintegration of prisoners into the community.

We are also trialling new technologies and equipment including electronic explosive and drug trace detection devices.

Corrective Services has increased random and targeted searching in our prisons and there has been a greater focus on alcohol and other drug testing of prisoners and staff.

In a move towards greater transparency, the Director General has transferred all staff alcohol and drug testing to Professional Standards.

Previously undertaken by the Drug Detection Unit within Corrective Services, this change will provide the necessary independence of this important site safety and corruption prevention function.

I fully support this change which clearly separates the day to day testing of prisoners from the staff integrity function.

This change will allow me to focus my resources on further prisoner testing which contributes to the safety and security of our prisons.

In the Commission's first report, issues were raised about the supervision of prisoners in the community. To protect staff from manipulation, prison officers are provided with anti-grooming training and behavioural expectations prior to commencing activities with s95 prisoners.

This training is being developed into an on-line refresher package that will be rolled out to all staff who operate in single officer posts that manage prisoners.

A tiered approach is taken to ensuring s95 activities are conducted in compliance with operational policy requirements. Superintendents conduct checks of s95 activities via the completion of a monthly checklist with additional oversight by the Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations.

The Monitoring and Compliance Branch conduct twice weekly checks to ensure adequate supervision of these prisoners which includes both desktop reviews and in person attendance.

Any identified non-compliance is reported to the Superintendent and a quarterly report is tabled at the Corrective Services Performance Assurance Risk and Audit Committee.

Tracking devices on Department vehicles also provide another oversight capability.

CCTV footage at our gatehouses are now examined on a monthly basis to assess compliance with policies and procedures and to identify staff engaged in at risk behaviours.

Commissioner, this provides a snapshot of the progress being made to implement and embed the recommendations made by the Commission and my commitment to continue this essential work.