

MEDIA RELEASE

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CCC reports focus on the use of force in WA prisons and expose a culture of cover up

The Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) has today tabled in State Parliament three separate reports focussed on the inadequacy of the reporting of use of force in Western Australian prisons.

The Commission has used the results of the investigations to inform a number of recommendations to the Department of Justice about how it might reduce the likelihood of serious misconduct in relation to reporting use of force incidents.

The three reports relate to the security of prisoners against whom unreasonable force was used, and the inadequacy of current processes and protocols for reporting use of force incidents. Although the reports cover a number of incidents at different prisons, they deal with common themes, being failure to report and misreporting of incidents of use of force, and officers of various seniority deliberately withholding information about use of force incidents from head office.

The investigations, opinions and recommendations are detailed in the:

- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in May 2017;](#)
- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison on 27 March 2017 and Bunbury Regional Prison on 14 November 2016;](#) and
- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Hakea Prison on 21 March 2016.](#)

The reports are the latest in a series from the Commission which highlight serious deficiencies in Western Australia's prison system.

Two previous Commission reports, the most recent tabled just yesterday (Tuesday 26 June 2018) relate to how easily the security of the prison boundary can be compromised when prison officers are groomed and corrupted, and the security of the community being compromised by lax supervision of prisoners outside the prison walls.

The CCC's work into corruption risks in the State's prison system is part of an ongoing joint investigation with the Department of Justice.

The CCC's investigative work has exposed cultural issues that compromise the integrity of the prison system, being an environment that not only allows misconduct, but fosters it; where some officers show little or no respect for rules, processes and protocols; where prison officers keep

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information from head office and where there is a reluctance on the part of some officers to report or identify misconduct.

Some of the most recent recommendations made by the Commission to the Department of Justice include:

- Promoting how staff can confidentially report potential criminal activity and misconduct concerning prison officers using force against prisoners, and officers who might not be reporting incidents appropriately or independently;
- Modifying a number of processes and practices in relation to the recording of use of force incidents including separating the primary user of force from the Departmental records of the incident and witnesses reports of the incident;
- Conducting mandatory training for prison officers in relation to independent, accurate and factual repository of use of force incidents;
- Updating, monitoring and auditing systems and processes so that officers have less opportunity to collude about their reporting of use of force;
- Taking action against prison officers who don't report incidents; make inaccurate statements or omit important information; and against officers who use force against prisoners without the proper training – and keep a register of the action taken;
- Considering stricter controls over the storage, issue, possession and use of chemical agent, a controlled weapon; and
- Considering specialised training for officers assigned to specialised units.

The Commission proposes to report on the implementation of recommendations by the Department of Justice in one year.

Related resources:

- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Hakea Prison on 21 March 2016 - CCTV Vision](#)
- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in May 2017 - CCTV of 1st incident](#)
- [Report into inadequate use of force reporting at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in May 2017 - CCTV of 2nd incident](#)

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