



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Justice**
Corrective Services

Response to OICS Draft Report:

**2023 Inspection of Banksia Hill Detention
Centre including Unit 18 at Casuarina**

2 May 2023

Version 1.1 (Amended Final)

Response Overview

Introduction

On 24 October 2022, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS) announced the 2023 Inspection of Banksia Hill Detention Centre (Banksia Hill) including Unit 18 at Casuarina (Unit 18). The inspection was scheduled to occur between 6 to 15 February 2023.

To assist with the inspection, the Department of Justice (the Department) facilitated the provision of a wide range of documentation, including policies and procedures, as well as access to systems, facilities, staff, detainees, and contractors upon OICS' request for the purpose of the inspection.

On 16 March 2023, the Department received a draft inspection report from OICS, for review and comment.

The Department has reviewed the draft report and provides further context, comments, and responses to the ten recommendations.

Appendix A contains comments linked to sections in the draft report for the Inspector's consideration when finalising the document.

Department Comments

The Department welcomes the inspection and acknowledges the findings in the draft report (the report) received following the 2023 Inspection of Banksia Hill and Unit 18.

Outlined below are actions completed by the Department and planning underway to address other issues identified.

The Department acknowledges staffing issues at the facility make running a full program difficult. The complex behaviours of some young people have resulted in staff assaults and contributed to increased workers compensation and personal leave. The current national labour market and media reports of incidents have made attraction and retention of staff even more difficult. Regrettably, this has a flow on effect on the provision of services to detainees.

Numerous initiatives are being progressed at Banksia Hill and Unit 18 to maximise out-of-cell hours for each young person, including the recruitment of additional youth custodial officers (YCOs) and further campaigns to attract staff. These include a range of financial incentives and allowances.

The 39 successful applicants from a recent recruitment campaign have commenced as trainees as part of the Entry Level Training Program (ELTP). These recruits are anticipated to complete the ELTP in May 2023 and will be deployed to Banksia Hill as probationary officers following their training.

A Staffing Taskforce has commenced on site to assist in the management of staffing matters with a view to maximising the number of YCOs working with young people in the centre.

A new operating philosophy and service model (model of care) for Banksia Hill is now being implemented. The model is based on world best practice in youth justice and focuses on rehabilitation and reducing reoffending behaviour through a trauma-informed, therapeutic approach. On 28 March 2023, former Mental Health

Commissioner and Under Treasurer Tim Marney joined the Department to implement a comprehensive change management plan and put the new model of care into practice.

The model of care is supported by \$95 million in State Government resourcing for Banksia Hill, which is funding infrastructure upgrades, a staged expansion of staffing, expanded mental health services and support programs, a new Crisis Care Unit (CCU) and a new Aboriginal Services Unit (ASU).

The CCU will provide an integrated model of management aimed at reducing self-harm and attempted suicide for young people with mental health issues. Operational procedures will be developed to incorporate a multi-disciplinary team approach and reflect recommendations associated with best practice.

The CCU will be staffed by mental health and health services staff in addition to youth custodial officers, youth justice psychological services and Aboriginal Youth Support Officers.

In the interim, an area of the Intensive Support Unit (ISU) is being converted into a temporary crisis care wing with improved accommodation and external recreation areas.

The ASU will comprise of Aboriginal mental health, Aboriginal health clinical nurse and Aboriginal youth support officer specialist positions to provide dedicated expert services and cultural guidance and advice as part of their membership of the multi-disciplinary team (MDT). The ASU will contribute to the individual, operational and cultural care of all young people in custody and implementation of the service model.

The Child and Adolescent Forensic Service (CAFS) in-reach service commenced in mid-March 2023. This initially began as a service involving one day per week from the Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and one day per week from the Mental Health Nurse. This is expected to be increased to a full-time Mental Health Nurse and a 0.4 FTE Psychiatric coverage. A number of meetings have been scheduled through April to further refine the collaboration between these services.

Discussions are ongoing between the Child and Adolescent Health Service, Child and Adolescent Forensic Service, Youth Justice Psychological Services and the Banksia Hill senior management team to refine the service model and operating principles for the in-reach service.

Additional funding was secured by the Mental Health Commission for an embedded mental health service comprising 8.0 FTE in the mid-year 2022/23 budget. Consultation has commenced to develop a model of care for this service, with a half-day planning workshop with all relevant stakeholders scheduled for mid- April 2023.

Ongoing training, including mentoring for new YCOs, is being facilitated to further educate staff on the behaviour management tools and practices available to promote and reinforce positive behaviour in young people. In line with this approach, a revised rewards and privileges scheme for good behaviour has been developed based on the complexities of managing young people in detention. The pilot scheme will commence at Banksia Hill in May 2023.

The Department continues to provide vocational training to provide young people with the work skills to prepare them for employment upon release. Some of the training options include white card, barista skill set, woodwork, horticulture, and music.

The 'Try - A -Trade' - painting and plumbing and master plumbing skills program is scheduled to commence in Term 3, 2023.

Currently 4.4 vocational teaching positions at Banksia Hill are filled with a recruitment process underway to fill two remaining vacancies. A further four vocational teaching positions will come online by December 2023.

Practical vocational skill-based training will be introduced, and funding will be requested through the next mid-year review process.

Detention centre charges have also been under review prior to the release of the draft report. The review has considered existing policies and procedures. Discussions between the President of the Children's Court and Banksia Hill's senior management team are ongoing for the smooth reintroduction of detention centre charges. Magistrates have been appointed as Visiting Justices and the Centre is progressing actions to train staff. Detention centre charges are expected to be able to be heard before visiting justices from 2 May 2023.

A new, enhanced cleaning schedule has commenced with a professional cleaning service and a rodent control program being undertaken every six weeks. Regular unit checks around cleanliness are conducted by the senior management team and improvements made as required.

Several actions to improve the living areas with soft furnishings, curtains, robust yet aesthetic furnishings that are young people friendly and more trauma informed have commenced with some already on order.

Multiple projects and works are progressing at Banksia Hill and while the structural improvements will make the facility more safe and secure, it is the model of care that will bring about long-term improvements in the care and support for young people and staff.

Unit 18 continues to house the most disruptive young people in custody who have been assessed as not able to be safely and securely managed at Banksia Hill. The intensive support structure introduced for the complex cohort of young people housed in Unit 18 will also be implemented in Jasper Unit which will be used to accommodate this cohort once works are completed. Unit 18 is a temporary facility for the young people while essential works are being completed at Banksia Hill.

Response to Recommendations

1 Commit to the design and construction of a second youth custodial facility that meets the complex needs of different cohorts of young people.

Level of Acceptance:	Noted
Responsible Division:	Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate:	Procurement Infrastructure & Contracts

Response:

The Department notes this recommendation is a matter for Government. Currently the commitment is to providing safe and secure accommodation and meeting the needs of different cohorts of young people at Banksia Hill.

2 Empower staff to use all of the behaviour management tools that are available to them under relevant policy and legislation.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported – current practice
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Women and Young People

Response:

The Department is committed to ensuring staff are aware of the behaviour management tools available to them, and that they understand the relationship between the behaviour of a young person and the consequence imposed for their actions.

Banksia Hill is piloting a new rewards and privileges scheme within select units of the centre in consultation with relevant specialists. The success of the pilot will determine the roll out of the scheme across other areas of the facility.

3 Re-implement detention centre charges and set tight timeframes for their hearing.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Women and Young People

Response:

The Department has liaised with the President of the Children's Court for the reintroduction of detention centre charges. Magistrates have been appointed as Visiting Justices and the Centre is progressing actions to train staff. It is expected detention centre charges will be heard by visiting justice from 2 May 2023.

4 Review the 'safe exit' technique and safe alternatives to this practice.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Operational Support

Response:

The Department's Security and Response branch has been conducting operational testing on alternative practices for the 'safe exit' technique since February 2023.

Training for any new technique will form part of a future rollout plan.

5 Urgently address staff support and retention issues.

Level of Acceptance: Supported – current practice
Responsible Division: Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate: Human Resources

Response:

The Department has implemented numerous mechanisms to support staff and improve attraction and retention rates. This includes additional incentive payments to YCOs who complete the current Entry Level Training Program (ELTP) and all YCOs at the end of this financial year.

A Staffing Taskforce has commenced on site to assist in the management of staffing matters with a view to maximising the number of YCOs working with young people in the centre.

The Department also expects to conduct an additional training program later this year, further to the two currently underway, and the planned June and September courses. This means it is anticipated at least five ELTPs will be conducted this year.

6 Reimagine and establish a youth care role – separate from youth custodial officers - to support and guide young people in every aspect of their day in custody.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Women and Young People

Response:

The model of care for Banksia Hill includes a diverse range of support services staff and other experts. Multi-disciplinary teams include, custodial officers, contracted intensive youth support workers (mentors), Aboriginal youth support officers, program officers and educational and vocational support workers. These teams will be further augmented with other specialist services and funding will be requested through the next mid-year review process.

7 Develop and implement a mixed-shift system to maximise consistency and continuity of care for young people.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Women and Young People

Response:

A review of the rosters at Banksia Hill is being undertaken.

8 Advertise and urgently recruit the additional AYSO positions and the Aboriginal Services Manager.

Level of Acceptance: Supported – current practice / project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Women and Young People

Response:

Vacant AYSO positions have been filled and the Aboriginal Services Manager position has been advertised on 24 April 2023, closing on 8 May 2023.

9 Examine alternative options for the location of the Crisis Care Unit.

Level of Acceptance: Not Supported
Responsible Division: Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate: Procurement, Infrastructure and Contracts

Response:

As part of the development of the new Crisis Care Unit, the Department identified four suitable locations for construction that would not require a significant redesign of Banksia Hill. The current selected site was deemed the most appropriate based on the following:

- Its central location creates an integrated feel, with the three other site options being some distance away, which would create a sense of isolation.
- The location is adjacent to accommodation units ensuring equal access for all detainees.
- Its proximity to health, education, visits, and other support services.

10 Implement a structured vocational training program that offers accredited training and work skills to prepare young people for employment on release.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Women and Young People

Response:

The Department continues to provide vocational training to provide young people with the work skills to prepare them for employment upon release. Some of the training options include white card, barista skill set, woodwork, horticulture, and music.

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