

Response to the Announced Inspection: 2025 Inspection of Broome Regional Prison

October 2025

Response Overview

On 24 March 2025, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS) announced the Inspection Broome Regional Prison (Broome), which took place from 18 to 23 May 2025.

To assist with the Inspection, the Department of Justice (the Department) provided a range of documentation as well as access to systems, custodial facilities, staff, and prisoners.

On 19 September 2025, the Department received the draft report which raised 13 recommendations for review and comment.

Of the 13 recommendations:

- Two are supported
- Five are supported in principle
- Four are supported and considered current practice / project
- One is noted, being not for the Department's decision
- One is not supported.

Detailed responses to the recommendations can be found below.

Response to Recommendations

1 The Department should clearly define Broome's role within the custodial estate and ensure the prison is properly supported to fulfil its intended purpose safely and effectively.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

In September 2025, the Department released the Corrective Services 2025-2030 Strategic Plan which sets out the key priorities and focus areas to achieve a *safer, smarter and healthier Corrections*. The Strategic Plan ensures there is a consistent framework against which all facilities can align their operational plans.

Planning is also underway to update the Department's Prison Network Design (PND) Model which, having originally been established in 2021, provides a 10-year forecast for the needs of the custodial estate in terms of service demand for the various cohorts and their associated infrastructure requirements.

Once updated, the PND Model will provide further clarity surrounding Broome's future role and purpose within the custodial estate.

In parallel, the Department is working on a range of strategies that aim to assist Broome in fulfilling its dual-purpose role as the primary reception facility for the Kimberley and a minimum-security prison. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Increasing staffing through additional Entry Level Training Programs (ELTPs) and accelerated training courses, which has resulted in 195 new graduates, with a further four courses planned before the end of 2025;
- Expansion works to key facilities across the estate including Casuarina Prison; and
- Weekly population management meetings to identify opportunities and share the population responsibility across the estate.

2 The Government should prioritise the replacement of Broome with a fit-for-purpose, appropriately resourced facility capable of meeting current and future demand.

Level of Acceptance: Noted
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Whilst the Department acknowledges the importance of ensuring custodial infrastructure in regional Western Australia is fit-for-purpose and capable of meeting both current and future demand, the construction of a new prison to replace Broome is ultimately a matter for Government.

The Department remains committed to maintaining safe and effective operations at Broome Regional Prison. A condition and capital expenditure forecast report

completed in May 2025 outlines the critical infrastructure requirements over the next decade. The Department will continue to support essential works, ensuring the facility remains operationally viable and responsive to the needs of the region.

3 The Department should significantly increase investment in infrastructure and resources at Broome to improve conditions and services for people in custody, until such time that a modern, purpose-built replacement facility is approved and constructed.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The condition and capital expenditure forecast report outlines the short, medium and long-term infrastructure needs of the current Broome facility over the next 10-years. The Department will continue to update government on infrastructure needs.

4 Prioritise urgent infrastructure repairs, cleaning, and pest control in the Maximum Security Section.

Level of Acceptance: Supported – Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Since the inspection, weekly cleaning parties supervised by the Maintenance Vocational Support Officer (VSO) attend the Maximum-Security Section (MSS) to undertake cleaning and repairs to infrastructure where possible. Where infrastructure repairs cannot be undertaken locally, these are logged with the Infrastructure and Environment Directorate for appropriate action.

In addition, a local pest control contractor has been engaged to address pests within the MSS and will continue to attend the site.

5 Restore access to the basketball court for maximum-security and female prisoners by installing a covered area to allow safe and consistent use throughout the year.

Level of Acceptance: Supported Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Superintendent has confirmed that both medium and maximum-security prisoners are risk assessed by the Security Manager and where appropriate, are permitted access to the basketball court.

Whilst women prisoners can access the basketball court, feedback from the women indicate that due to the close proximity to the minimum-security male unit, they opt not to utilise the basketball courts.

The Department is however in the process of assessing the feasibility and cost associated to construct an additional cover for the basketball court which if implemented, may promote the use of the basketball court by female prisoners and provide additional segregation from the minimum-security units and courts.

6 Review the re-entry service contract at Broome to ensure value, effectiveness, and alignment with contract obligations.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

The Department's Rehabilitation and Reintegration Branch will undertake a desktop review of the *Kimberley Region – Re-entry and Accommodation and Parenting Advice and Support Services Service Agreement* (the Service Agreement).

The review will examine the current delivery of reintegration services under the Service Agreement and identify how gaps in service provision can be improved, such as the limited availability of services to remand prisoners, and how services can be more meaningfully delivered to those close to release.

The findings of this review will inform the commissioning process for the next Service Agreement.

7 Establish a Transitional Manager position to coordinate reintegration and release planning.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

The Department acknowledges there is a need for transitional services at Broome and is considering options for how these could be delivered based on the cohort needs and demand at Broome.

Should additional resourcing be necessary, this would ultimately be subject to funding approval.

8 Substantively fill all nursing vacancies and increase GP resourcing to meet demand.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Offender Services

Response:

Commencing January 2026, General Practitioner (GP) services delivered by the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (BRAMS) will double from a single four-hourly session per week to two four-hourly sessions, to adequately service the average daily population (ADP) at Broome¹.

The Department's Justice Health and Wellbeing Services (JHWS) branch is also in the process of advocating for additional clinical staff FTE at Broome, including:

- 2x Clinical Nurses
- 1x Prison Support Officer
- 1x Aboriginal Health Worker

The establishment of additional FTE will be dependent on funding.

In relation to nursing, as at October 2025, all nursing positions at Broome were substantively filled.

9 Resource on-site mental health services and in-reach clinical support to meet growing demand.

Level of Acceptance:	Not Supported
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Offender Services

Response:

Mental health supports are provided at Broome through the existing Prison Councillor position, with the Department also seeking to establish a Prison Support Officer (PSO) position, as per the response to recommendation eight.

In addition, a Mental Health Nurse position is shared with West Kimberley attending Broome once a fortnight and as required.

Based on Broome's lower prisoner population and its primary role as a holding facility for short-term and remand prisoners, there is not enough demand for a full time on-site dedicated Mental Health Nurse.

¹ As at 30 September 2025, the 2025 ADP at Broome was 98.

10 Establish a formal information-sharing policy with the Department of Health, including secure access to systems such as Psychiatric Services On-Line Information System (PSOLIS) for prison-based health staff.

Level of Acceptance: Supported Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

All psychiatrists and mental health clinicians employed by the Department currently have read-only access to the Psychiatric Services On-Line Information System (PSOLIS).

Further discussions ongoing with the Department of Health to extend this access to all medical officers who provide primary health to people in custody.

The Department is advocating for all clinicians to be provided with writable access to improve communications between health care providers and ensure continuity of care.

11 Expand the Aboriginal Services Committee to include a broader range of community stakeholders.

Level of Acceptance: Supported Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Aboriginal Services Committee (ASC) at Broome continues to engage with a range of community groups to improve opportunities for First Nations prisoners, including the commencement of the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program, which provides literacy, numeracy and computer skills courses and aims to link offenders with community-based organisation, Jobs Pathways, to assist in identifying employment and vocational opportunities post-release.

Other First Nations organisations engaged to provide support to First Nations prisoners include Aarnja, Nirrumbuk, Community Elders, BRAMS and Gullarri Radio.

While it is noted that the Broome ASC has not engaged with the Shire of Broome, the intention and purpose of ASCs is to enter into partnerships with First Nations organisations and community groups to improve First Nations prisoner access to pre- and post-release employment opportunities and accommodation services. While partnerships with local shires may be beneficial, they do not fall within the core focus group for ASC activities.

12 Reinstate and properly fund Prison Support Officers (PSOs) and Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (AVS) staff to strengthen prisoner support services.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

The Department acknowledges the critical role of appropriate support services to people in custody and remains committed to strengthening these services.

The Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (AVS) continues to operate a 24/7 call centre, providing free, confidential support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody and their loved ones. AVS Officers offer cultural support and triage issues through referrals within custodial facilities and to external support networks. This service is accessible via the Prisoner Telephone System (PTS) and to community members at any time.

Recruitment to regional facilities remains a challenge due to workforce availability, however the AVS continues to prioritise recruitment efforts across all custodial locations, including Broome Regional Prison.

As per the response to recommendation eight, the Department is supportive of re-establishing the PSO position Broome. In the interim, telehealth PSO appointments are facilitated at Broome.

13 Increase security staffing levels.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Through the *Safer Custody Staffing Review*, the Department analysed staffing requirements against current and projected prisoner population rates and prisoner needs, identifying that additional Full Time Equivalent (FTE) were required to maintain security operations.

The Department is in the process of advocating for additional FTE through the SLA process.