

MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED UNTIL 9 JUNE 2026
Show Cause Notice - Hakea Prison, Casuarina Prison and Melaleuca Women's Prison

Today the Inspector of Custodial Services, Mr Eamon Ryan, released a report outlining deteriorating conditions at Hakea, Casuarina and Melaleuca prisons which led to the issue of a Show Cause Notice under section 33A of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2003.

Under the Act, the Inspector can issue a Show Cause Notice if they suspect on reasonable grounds that:

1. There is a serious risk to the security, control, safety, care or welfare of a prisoner, detainee, or person in custody, or
2. That a prisoner, detainee, or person in custody is being, or has been, subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment

The report finds that what began as a failure at Hakea in 2024 and 2025 has escalated into a system-wide breakdown, with similar risks now evident across multiple facilities. The Inspector identified serious risks to the safety, security and welfare of prisoners, with conditions in some cases potentially amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Sustained population growth and workforce shortfalls have driven overcrowding, routine lockdowns and restricted access to services, increasing levels of harm across the system. The report notes high rates of use of force, assaults, and self-harm and draws parallels with the warning signs prior to the 2018 Greenough Regional Prison riot.

It concludes that incremental responses will be insufficient, calling for a funded, whole-of-government reform response.

Lines attributable to the Inspector, Mr Eamon Ryan:

"This is no longer a problem confined to a single facility — it reflects a systemic failure across multiple prisons."

"Current conditions pose a serious risk to the safety and wellbeing of both prisoners and staff, and in some cases may amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment."

"The system is operating beyond its capacity, with overcrowding, workforce pressures and restrictive regimes now embedded as the norm."

Eamon Ryan
Inspector

For further media information: The Inspector, Mr Eamon Ryan, will be holding a media conference on the ground floor at Albert Facey House at 1pm on Tuesday 9 June 2026. All media outlets are welcome to attend. The full report will be available on the Inspector's website: www.oics.wa.gov.au